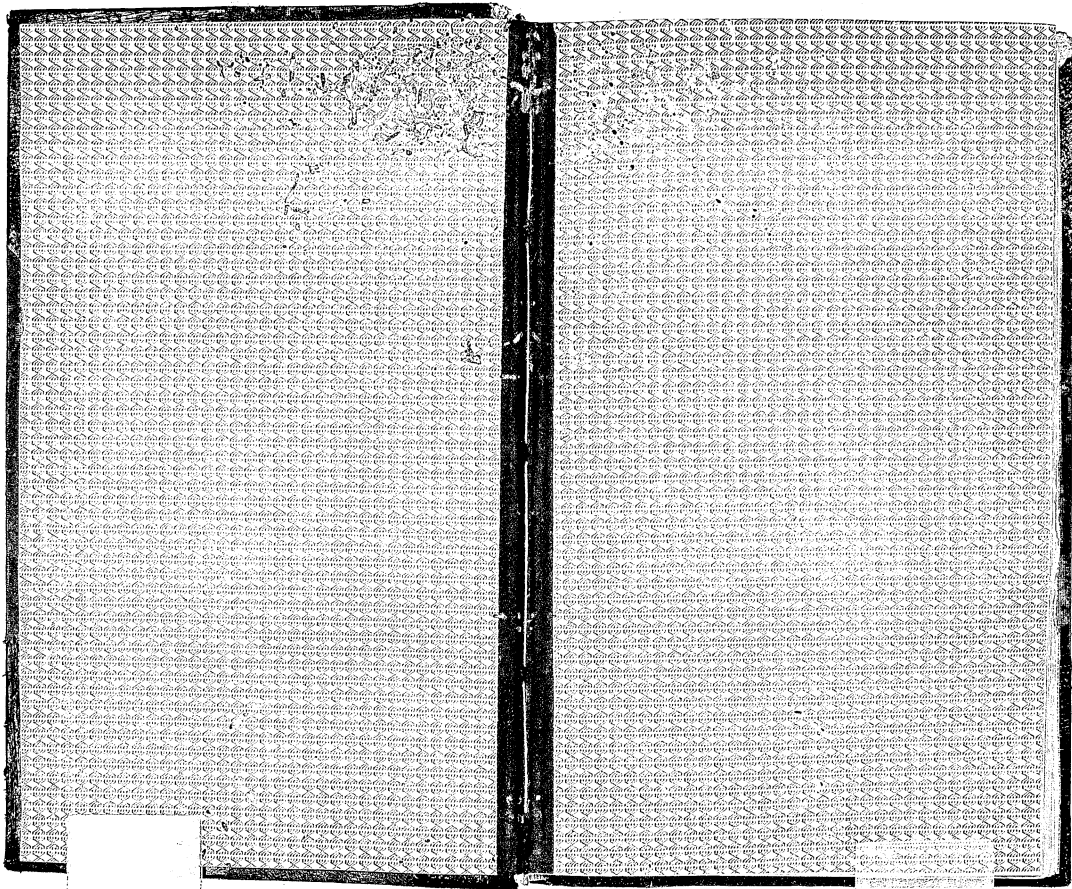


REPORT
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FROM
1ST MAY TO 31ST OCTOBER 1880





REPORT
OF
THE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

For the half-year ended 31st October 1880.

CALCUTTA:
PRINTED BY THOMAS S. SMITH, CITY PRESS,
12, BENTINCK STREET,

1880.

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*Proceedings of the Half-yearly General Meeting
of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on
Monday the 17th January 1881.*

W. E. CRUM, Esq., *President*, in the Chair.

THE Chairman said that this General Meeting of the Chamber was held for the purpose of receiving the Report of Proceedings of the Committee during the half-year ended 31st October last; and in submitting it for their approval he addressed the members present as follows :—

Gentlemen,—In moving the adoption of the Report, it has been the custom of many of my predecessors to refer briefly to a number of the various subjects which have engaged the attention of the Committee during the half-year, and to dwell at greater length on one or two of those which may seem to be the more important. With your permission, and even at the risk of troubling you with somewhat lengthy remarks, I intend to follow that practice to-day, believing that it best serves the purpose of making members acquainted with the work done by their Committee, which after all is, I understand, the main object of these half-yearly meetings. Before taking up these sub-

jects, I would wish to express my thanks to my colleagues on the Committee and to our worthy Secretary for the ready and valuable assistance they have at all times given in helping me to fulfil the duties of an office for which my short experience of Calcutta and of the work of the Chamber hardly fitted me.

After consulting the members of the Chamber, who were unanimously in favour of it, the Committee drew up an address of welcome and congratulation to His Excellency the Marquis of Ripon, which will appear in our next half-yearly report. It was intended to ask His Excellency to do us the honour of allowing a deputation from the Chamber to present it after his arrival; but having regard to his Lordship's state of health, the consequence of the severe illness from which we all rejoice to know that he is now recovering, we thought it best not to seek to trouble him with an audience, and the address has therefore been forwarded through his Private Secretary.

The report contains rather a voluminous correspondence on the question of the days of departure of the Overland Mails, and as all that we have done is fully explained there, whilst there has very recently been a public meeting on the subject, I do not think it necessary to trouble you with more than a very few words in regard

to it. The Committee have of course been careful to ascertain and be guided by the feelings of members in any action they have taken in this important matter, and they deeply regret that their efforts to obtain, consistently with a consideration for other interests, convenient and suitable days of departure for Calcutta have not resulted in success, and that those of this important place have been so completely ignored. The memorial adopted at the public meeting held in this room has been largely signed and will reach the Secretary of State in due course, and I trust have the effect of at least getting for us a reconsideration of the decision which gives us a Monday mail-day.

So far back as 1867, and frequently since then, this Chamber has had under consideration the subject of compulsory registration of partnerships, but up to this time no legislation in regard to it has taken place. Lately the matter was again taken up by your Committee, who have considered it one of very grave importance, and which should not be allowed to rest so long as there is any hope of getting an enactment which will improve the existing state of things. You all know how impossible it often is to ascertain who are the partners in many native firms with whom we have dealings, how it not unfrequently happens, that whilst according to general belief a man is a

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partner and is probably virtually so, he has only, when the firm becomes insolvent, to deny what cannot be proved, and thus escape all consequences, and how difficult it is to get delivery of goods in execution of decrees, seeing that if a partner turns up whose existence at the time of the suit was not known, he can claim an interest in the property seized, and so prevent its being given up to the creditor. The Government appears quite to realize the importance of the subject, but has from time to time pointed out difficulties which have hitherto prevented legislation. Whilst fully alive to these, we nevertheless, with the aid of our solicitors, are still hopeful that they may be overcome; and during the coming half-year the matter will again engage our attention.

We have again been pressing on Government the great importance of trying to advance arrangements by which decrees obtained in British Courts against absconding debtors may be executed in those native States where such reciprocity at present does not exist.

Amongst other old friends with which we have had to deal, I may mention the Factory Labour Bill and the Trades Marks Bill. These are legislative measures which, so far as Calcutta is concerned, we still think undesirable.

With the aid of some members of the Chamber who are more particularly interested in the

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Kerosine oil trade, we have considered and given to Government our views regarding the provisions of the Petroleum Bill. In dealing with a class of oil which in certain forms, or under certain conditions becomes dangerous, it is, of course, the duty of Government to take measures to guard against danger to life and property, but it is equally its duty to avoid unnecessary and vexatious legislation, and in every way to foster and encourage any trade which is likely to prove of benefit to the country. The dangerous nature of this oil has been greatly over-estimated, and of this we have had abundant evidence, beyond the fact that hitherto there has been an almost perfect immunity from accidents of any serious nature, notwithstanding that during the past year alone as much as five million gallons have been imported into India. We endeavoured to convince the Government that many of the provisions of the Bill as originally proposed are unnecessary, and that if carried into effect the result would be so seriously to hamper and restrict the importation and sale of the article as to check, if not to stamp out altogether, a trade which has already become one of magnitude and importance, and which, as we all know, is conferring immense benefits on the people of this country. I am glad to see that our recommendations, with those of others, seem to have had the desired effect; for I notice that

the Select Committee of the Legislative Council, to which the Bill was referred, have so amended its provisions as to do away with the objectionable features to which attention was drawn.

The Committee addressed the Government of India in regard to the tariff for inland telegraph messages with a view to getting it modified. The present minimum charge of one rupee for any number of words up to six they considered excessive, but they were more particularly anxious that, instead of the system of continuing the charge in the same proportion throughout the message, there should be a rate per word for any in excess of the minimum limitation, thus avoiding the present anomaly of seven words costing twice as much as six. It must be obviously an advantage to the Telegraph Department to have long messages submitted for transmission, because the cost of what we may call the unremunerative work, i.e., the gratuitous sending of the address and official instructions, is necessarily decreased according as the length of each message is increased. So far the Government has not seen its way to consider our proposals favourably. Whilst making full allowance for the difficulties which have to be faced in India compared with other countries in the introduction and maintenance of the telegraph system, the fact remains that the department has not been sufficiently progressive,

and that the whole system has yet to be greatly extended and improved before it can be admitted that nearly all that is possible has been done to make it perfect.

In connection with the telegraph there naturally comes up for consideration the question of the telephone, about which we have all lately heard so much. You are all aware of the extent to which this invention is now being used both in Europe and in America, and how its usefulness and popularity are steadily increasing. At first sight it would appear, from the nature of our business transactions, to be less adapted to our wants than to those of European or American business centres, but I think that, once introduced, we would find it to be a very valuable help in our every-day transactions. The extent to which it would be used must of course depend very much upon the cost, but I understand from the representative of the Edison Telephone Company, that this would not exceed Rs. 20 per month to each subscriber connected with the Central Exchange, a rate which could not be prohibitory. A work of this kind can, I think, be best done when left to private enterprise, and it is to be hoped that the decision of the Government not to grant any concession to a private Company may be withdrawn; seeing that the uses for which the telephone here is

intended, make it almost impossible that its introduction could in any way interfere with the monopoly which the Government has of the telegraph system.

The Government having lately noticed that sea-borne salt had to a considerable extent been displaced in the North West Provinces and Behar by indigenous salt from the Sambhur lake, invited the opinion of the Committee as to the extent of the displacement, and as to the effect likely to be produced by an equalization of the duties in a reduction of that on sea-borne to that charged on the indigenous article. It being a matter of great importance the Committee considered it very carefully, as you may have seen from the reply. We were satisfied that if sea-borne salt were not so heavily handicapped as it is at present, it would penetrate much further into the large consuming districts of Behar and the N. W. Provinces. The rates of duty are at present respectively Rs. 2-14 and Rs. 2-8 per maund, and the Committee, fully alive to the advantages of that policy which has sought to reduce the duty on an article of such universal benefit to the country, would gladly have advocated the reduction of the higher tariff, had they not felt that it would at present be dangerous to run the risk of reducing the revenue, and so perhaps necessitating the imposition of an income tax or of some

other such undesirable form of taxation. They, therefore, gave as their recommendation the levelling up of the one and the levelling down of the other to the same point, which would in their opinion tend to increase the consumption and to prevent loss of revenue, whilst in no way adversely affecting the cost to the people. An examination of the N. W. Customs Administration Report for 1879-80 shews us however that there is something more to be done than the mere equalization of the duties before sea-borne salt can be said to have fair play in competition with the product of the Sambhur lake. It would appear that the supply of common salt at the stores became exhausted towards the end of 1879, and in consequence the demand was supplied with the finer quality at a price 5 to 6 annas per maund under its real value. Merchants, as was natural, shewed their appreciation of this liberality by increasing their purchases to such an extent as to cause an unprecedented off-take in December and January. Surely the business-like plan to have adopted in such circumstances would have been to have supplied the finer salt only at its proper price, and thus the Government would not have been a loser, whilst the consumption of sea-borne salt would have increased. Besides the value of the revenue which it yields, there are many reasons why the trade in English salt

should not be placed at a disadvantage, but rather fostered and encouraged in every possible way. Without a market here for salt our sailing ships would have no cargoes to bring, the tonnage available would be greatly reduced, higher freights would be a natural consequence, and the inevitable result would be a discouragement of our export trade.

On the subject of the Small Cause Court, Bill I need only say a very few words; the letter addressed to the Government by the Committee having already been published and commented on in the daily newspapers. We believe that in expressing approval of the extension of pecuniary jurisdiction to amounts not exceeding Rs. 2,000, we have rightly interpreted the feelings of the mercantile public, to whom it will be a great advantage no longer to be limited to half that amount in disputes which they desire to have quickly settled, without going through the tedious and expensive process which a High Court suit entails. This benefit we have however felt would be very dearly purchased if it should result in depriving the Small Cause Courts of their most essential feature—speedy procedure. As we have pointed out, there are clauses in the Bill which would seem to have the tendency to so increase the work and lengthen the proceedings as to change the whole nature

of the Courts in regard to this most important characteristic, and these, we think, ought to be so altered as to carefully guard against such a danger.

Two years ago your then President, Mr. George Yule, in an able and interesting address, went into the question of port charges and port management, and it may not be out of place for me now to say a few words on the same subject, suggested by the resolution of the Bengal Government on the Port Commissioner's Report of 1879-80, which will be found at the end of our report. The Commissioners are to be congratulated on the work done during the year, on the increasing value of their property, and generally on their continued able management; but it is for us to watch closely how the good results are obtained, and to see whether, consistently with that good management, the charges on trade are kept on a moderate scale, from what sources the profits are derived, and how they are applied. The total debt of the trust amounts only to Rs. 71,05,349; of this Rs. 17,65,000 represents the value of the block made over by Government on its formation and not repayable, and Rs. 53,40,349 loans obtained from Government for new works, bearing interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and repayable in thirty years. The revenue derived from works since 1870 is shown to be Rs. 39,66,382, nearly

all spent in improvements. The gross income for the year under review was Rs. 18,64,293, and the ordinary expenditure, including the interest on debt and sums set aside for insurance fund, was Rs. 13,67,948, leaving a balance of Rs. 4,96,345, which, with a cash balance brought forward from the previous year, leaves the Commissioners with Rs. 5,85,612 to spend on new works and improvements, and with a good balance again to come forward for the current year. An examination of the accounts shows us from what sources this large revenue is derived:

Nett Income 1878-79.

	Rs.
Jetties ...	2,02,077
Strand Bank Lands...	1,52,415
Inland Vessels Wharves	1,59,388
Port Proper ...	1,68,947

It will be seen that notwithstanding the recent reduction in landing charges, the nett income from the Jetties has shown an increase, and the probabilities are that we will find this to be even more marked when the figures for 1880-81 are published, showing (to whatever other causes it may be attributed) that a judicious lowering of charges is sure to enlarge the volume of business, and up to a certain limit, to increase the income. Now, there is no doubt that with an

annual revenue of about 18½ lakhs, and a current expenditure of only 13½ lakhs,—which includes interest on loans and sinking fund applied to the repayment within thirty years of three-fourths of the debt,—the financial position of the Port Trust is most satisfactory. Merchants and ship-owners may however be excused if they question the justice or necessity of a system which burdens them now with heavy charges, thus giving future generations an almost free port with all possible improvements and conveniences. It is true, no doubt, that a heavy annual outlay may still be indispensable for many years to come, but surely this need not be met so largely out of revenue as it seems to have been in the past. The Commissioners have now the power to borrow, and their position as owners of so large and valuable a property should enable them to do so without difficulty, and Calcutta should surely no longer be allowed to remain under the stigma of being such a very expensive port.

Since replying to the letter from the Dominion Board of Trade, Canada, inviting us to nominate three representatives of commercial interests of Bengal at the approaching Colonial Conference to be held in London next month, the Committee have requested Mr. J. N. Bullen, Mr. Stephen Ralli, and Mr. D. H. Macfarlane, M. P., to act as the Chamber's delegates.

I think you are all aware of the troubles which have lately arisen in regard to the working of the rules which came into force in March 1879, exempting from duty grey goods made of yarns not finer than 30's; and as the correspondence we have had with Government on the subject is very full and complete, it will be unnecessary for me to go into details with which all of you are probably now conversant. Suffice it to say that, until very recently, everything seemed to be working smoothly, and no one had much cause for complaint excepting on the broad ground that it was inexpedient and unfair to handicap with duty many well-known cloths which, if made in a non-dutiable form in order to compete with the new duty free cloths, would lose the characteristics which had for many years past gained for them a reputation in this market. But suddenly the Custom House authorities seemed to adopt a new policy of strictness, punishing by confiscation and fine all cases alike in which they discovered that cloths were not uniformly made of the duty free yarns.* It mattered not whether the amount of finer yarn discovered was infinitesimal or materi-

* It has been brought to my notice that I was wrong in suggesting that a new policy of strictness had been recently introduced by the Custom House authorities; I am assured that from the beginning, in March 1879, until this question arose, there was no alteration in the policy or method of dealing with the goods; and this being so, I regret that I have seemingly done the Custom House authorities some injustice.—W. E. C.

al, the same punishment was inflicted. What we have endeavoured to explain to Government, and I believe it is now understood and realized, is that all the cases which have come to our notice where fine yarns were introduced have in our opinion been the result entirely of accident or carelessness, that in such cases the gain to the manufacturer would be so very trifling as to warrant our arriving at this conclusion, whilst this view is further strengthened by the fact that no buyer would willingly receive goods of the irregular texture which an admixture of finer yarns must produce. Thus a manufacturer can have nothing to gain and everything to lose by, in any such open and partial way, attempting to evade the requirements of the law. In saying this I do not wish to be understood to imply that attempts may not have been made, and successfully so, to manufacture cloths which, although really dutiable, may pass here as duty free, for we are informed that it is not an uncommon thing to put finer yarn than 30's into the warp where it cannot in practice be detected. But it is not of such cases (none of which have come before the Committee) that I am now speaking, and we would all be only too ready to see those who willingly lend themselves to such a fraud severely punished. I am glad to say that in response to our representations Govern-

ment at once issued orders for the restoration of all the goods confiscated and of all fines awarded where the amount of light weight discovered was found not to exceed 2 per cent. of the entire yarn in the parcel. At the same time it has been ruled that the Collector is entitled to levy full duty on all shipments found to contain fine yarns in however small a quantity, and to confiscate and impose a fine in all instances where goods are found to be uniformly made of yarns even one count finer than 30's. We still think that the rules which have resulted and are laid down for the guidance of the Collector of Customs aim at punishments too severe, for undoubted cases of accident or carelessness, and that the limit proposed under which the extreme penalties are to be inflicted is too confined. It must not be supposed that if the Government comes down on the importer, he in his turn can 'always turn' to the manufacturer for redress, and if it be impossible for the manufacturer always to be certain that the 30's he is using, may not under certain circumstances wrap 31's, in how much greater a degree must it be impossible for the purchaser of the goods to ascertain with certainty that there may not be this slight variation which now renders him liable to a ruinous loss, against which he probably cannot insure himself. We are at present corresponding on the subject,

but I cannot help thinking that it is unfortunate that in the first instance the discretion given to the Collector, by the Act in regard to the infliction of penalties was not judiciously exercised, for thus perhaps would have been avoided all the trouble, irritation and annoyance which have resulted during the last few months. It is surely unnecessary for me to say that the earnest wish of this Chamber is to see the Government revenue jealously guarded, and that for cases of intentional fraud none of the punishments allowed by the Act are too severe, and we would be far from urging any laxness which could have the effect of encouraging the attempt to evade payment of the legitimate taxes of the country. I confess I sympathise with the difficulty the Government, no doubt, have in dealing with this matter at its present stage, for it can be no easy thing to draw a sufficiently broad line between what is to be placed in the category *accidental* and what in that of *fraud*, without on the one hand seeming to encourage gross carelessness, and on the other of inflicting a punishment altogether unmerited. I believe myself that if it has ceased to be a question determinable by the wise discretion of the Collector, it will be impossible to carry out the provisions of the Act in any way which will be found to work fairly and smoothly for the

Government on the one hand or the importer or manufacturer on the other, and thus we come to the broad issue of what should be done in regard to the whole question of the cotton duties, which can no longer be allowed to settle itself by the slow process of natural death which six months ago seemed to be the best practical solution. The answer to this seems to be that Government should choose between re-imposition of the duties, their total abolition, or their further partial abolition by the extension of exemption to all grey goods and yarns. The first alternative I am inclined to dismiss as impracticable, and therefore hardly worthy of serious consideration. No Home Government would attempt such a retrograde movement, for however much some of us may regret and disapprove of the course which was followed in response to the Lancashire agitation so long before it was warranted by the financial position of the country, we could hardly now, as advocates of free trade, consistently ask for the repeal of an enactment which, had the finances of India been ready for it, would gladly have been welcomed as a further step towards the complete realization of that great policy which may some day exist to the benefit of both countries. This Chamber has always been opposed to any premature or partial abolition of the duties, know-

ing full well that however desirable, on broad principles, any such movement might be in itself, it would necessitate the imposition of direct taxation in some form or other which would press more heavily on the people and be productive of greater irritation and discontent, and therefore the true interests of India required a postponement of any immediate legislation such as has taken place. But whatever our opinion may have been in the past, the position, now that the duties have been partially abolished, seems to me to be greatly altered. The trade has adapted itself to the new circumstances, and I cannot believe in the wisdom of any movement which would aim at a complete return to the old system. It may be interesting to notice how rapidly it has so adapted itself, and how effectually the new cloths made of heavier yarns to pass free are displacing the old dutiable goods. In March 1879, the proportion of duty free Shirtings (our largest article of import) to the total quantity imported was only 24 per cent; six months later it was 50 per cent; and now it is nearly 90 per cent; and the same, in a greater or lesser degree, holds good in regard to all grey cloths, excepting Jaconets and Mulls, which have not yet been made, and are not likely to be made, of the heavier yarns.

If the opinion recently expressed by the

Lieutenant-Governor, that the present system is one which it is practically impossible to work with fairness, be admitted, then it seems to me that the Government will be forced either to abolish the duties wholly, or to extend the exemption further than it now goes. The first of these alternatives would probably receive the greatest support, but even admitting that it would be a more equitable course to adopt than that of the exemption only of grey goods and grey yarns, I cannot see that the Government is called upon at present to take a step involving such an important further loss of revenue as the freedom from duty of all other cloths would necessitate. Judging from the results of that part of the financial year which has gone, and calculating the same proportion for the unexpired portion, which however is doubtless too sanguine a view to take, the revenue of the financial year derived from the cotton duties promises, as compared with former years, to be somewhat as follows :—

	1878-79.	1879-80.	1880-81.
Grey Goods ...	41,43,244	28,00,091	16,88,000
All Yarns ...	9,02,040	8,46,018	11,26,000
Other Cotton Goods ...	26,67,511	31,73,739	45,13,000
	77,12,804	68,10,848	73,27,000

The current year is an exceptional one, in so far that, from various circumstances, the imports of colored and printed goods have been unusually large and even excessive, and it would therefore be imprudent for Government to expect the permanency of so large a duty revenue; but from these figures we may learn that to abolish the duties altogether would be to sacrifice a revenue of from 60 to 70 lakhs; whilst, judging by the rapidity with which the proportion of grey goods now coming free is increasing, to abandon it only on all these and on grey yarns would not cost the Government more than perhaps some 15 to 16 lakhs. Such a further partial exemption could not of course be defended except on the ground of necessity, and would no doubt provoke an outcry of dissatisfaction, for the printer, the dyer and the bleacher will all think themselves hardly treated in the matter; but as yet the goods they produce meet with little or no competition in Indian manufacture, and the duties levied on them cannot therefore in any sense be called protective, whilst all may rest satisfied that the object of the duties being entirely to raise revenue, they cannot be continued any longer than is required in the interests of the people of India, whose welfare should be the first consideration, and who have certainly suffered less from this form of taxation than

from almost any other which could be devised to replace it. If they are not to be reimposed nor entirely abolished, then there, will, I presume, be no necessity for, and no idea at present of, introducing a registration fee scheme, such as the Hon'ble Mr. Hope foreshadowed in the beginning of this financial year, the primary object of which would be to cover the cost of preparing statistics of trade and navigation, but which, we could hardly doubt, would go a good deal further. The present report contains our letter to Government on this subject, written after we had taken your views, which we found were decidedly opposed to the scheme. I could have seen little harm in the proposal had it not, as presented to us, so strongly resembled in everything but name a customs duty, and had it not seemed, from its very general and sweeping nature, and from the necessary inequality of its incidence, to be so liable to the objection that it must ultimately prove a greater source of trouble to the trade than there is even under the present system. It would also have the disadvantage of being a general tax on our export trade, and we all know how that requires rather to be encouraged by the reduction of charges than by their imposition in however small a degree.

Having now touched upon most of the sub-

jects engaging our attention, it may perhaps not be out of place, in conclusion, to say a few words on the present position of trade; and first I would congratulate you on the termination of the war in Afghanistan, on the well-founded hope entertained for the successful government of India under the new régime, and on the bountiful harvests with which India has now been blessed. As to the policy which brought about the war, it would be out of place for me to speak; whether we approved of it or not, we must all rejoice that it has come to an end, and that at last the country is being saved further enormous expenditure.

India's prosperity is, as we all know, greatly dependent on her harvests. If these be deficient there must follow poverty and distress, imports and exports fall off, whilst the Government has to meet increasing demands with a decreasing revenue, public works are curtailed or suspended, and taxation has to be increased; but if they be abundant, there must follow good wages and cheap food, an increase of imports and exports, an expansion of the revenue and consequent extension of useful works tending to develop the resources of the country. Although prosperity cannot of course altogether be estimated by the extent of the imports and exports, yet there is no doubt that from these,

if other circumstances be not forgotten, it may be judged in a very important degree, and I think the increase during the present financial year is so remarkable, as showing of what India is capable under favourable circumstances, that the figures deserve some attention. Turning to the first, we find that during the eight months ended 30th November the total value of imports of cotton goods and yarns, which are after all the real test of the buying power, and, therefore, prosperity of this country, was

1880	...	Rs. 17,00,97,000
1879	...	„ 12,39,38,000
1878	...	„ 11,82,44,000

or, considering that the stocks held are not generally speaking very excessive, an immense increase in consuming power. In examining the figures closely, we find that the increase of imports as between Bombay and Calcutta has not been at all equally divided, for whereas in the case of the former it has been 67 per cent., in that of the latter it has only been 30 per cent., accounted for, in an important degree, by the fact that whilst our trade with the N. W. Provinces has a decided tendency to fall off, that of Bombay is steadily increasing. I fear we must expect that the Western Rajputana Railway now opened will further enable Bombay to take from us a large portion of our trade, and that we will

have in the future to look more than ever on Bengal as our great consuming market.

I am sorry to say that when we turn to exports we do not as yet find the improvement as remarkable or important, and yet an examination of the subject cannot but inspire some hope that a gradual development is in process. The total exports of Indian produce for the 8 months of the financial year were

1880	...	Rs. 44,30,57,623
1879	...	„ 39,59,18,867
1878	...	„ 37,84,48,867

The increase this year has been chiefly in cotton from Bombay, rice from Burmah, and wheat and seeds from Bombay and Calcutta. No one who has the true interests of India at heart can help looking anxiously to see whether there is the prospect that in the future she can more than hold her own in the race of competition with other agricultural producing countries, brought nearer to the large consuming markets by greater internal facilities and lesser ocean distance. It is interesting to notice that notwithstanding ever increasing crops of cotton and wheat in America, there has in these two large articles of export been a very important improvement during the months I have spoken of, the value of cotton exported being 33 per cent. and

of wheat 250 per cent. in excess of the average of the two previous years; and even comparing them with the same period of the year 1877-78, which from the operation of various exceptional causes was a very remarkable one in regard to the extent of exports, the total value of those has even been exceeded during the present financial year. It is an old cry that we want the resources of the country to be developed by the judicious prosecution of public works, but it is one which must never be silenced; and this Chamber must in the future continue to urge on Government, as it has done in the past, the necessity for a steady increase of railway communication, for there is yet much to do before it can be said that the products of the soil are brought as cheaply as they might be to the great sea-board centres. I think when we consider the extent of the improvement in imports and exports, and the high position in which the credit of the Government of India now stands,—which must tend to facilitate the future development of the country,—we are justified in taking a hopeful view of Indian prospects. But a time of prosperity is a time to prepare for adversity, and as the finances improve under careful management, it is surely not too much to expect that the present restrictions on the prosecution of public works may be removed, and that

they may again be vigorously taken in hand to the lasting benefit of India.

Mr. H. B. H. TURNER, in seconding the adoption of the report, said,—I have undertaken to offer to the Chamber some explanation of the action of the Committee, of which I am a member, with respect to the question of the mail, which action was called in question at the recent public meeting upon the subject.

At that meeting, one speaker complained that not only in his own opinion, but also in that of several other gentlemen, our action had been injudicious, that had the Committee shown less explicit interest in endeavouring to get an arrangement which would satisfy them, the probability is that now we should have had an arrangement which would have been satisfactory to the whole of the communities interested; and special exception was taken to an expression, said to have been used in writing to Government, that Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day for the departure of the mails from Calcutta. This expression, it was added, seems to throw upon Government the duty of finding some other day which would be more suitable for the community interested. It appears to me, however, that these charges are based upon a misconception of the correspondence. The Committee endeavoured,

in all their communications with the Government, to show that they were not unmindful of general interests, and though they did write that Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day for the closing of the Calcutta mails, this particular expression was used not in writing to the Government, but to the Bombay Chamber. Bombay had set itself to secure at all hazards a Friday evening sailing of the mail steamer, and had commenced the agitation by complaining loudly of the loss of the Saturday half holiday and of the interference with the volunteer drill. But no sooner did the Director General of the Post Office point out that these objects might be obtained by an early closing of the mails on Saturday, than Bombay merchants discovered that it was not the half holiday they wanted after all, but that on the contrary they could not afford to spare even a few hours of work in view of the keen competition of the most enterprising nation of the world to which they were subjected. It was in replying to arguments such as these, forced home by the Bombay Chamber assuring us that we were unreasonable, that the Committee gave utterance to the voice of the Chamber and did write to the Bombay Chamber (not to Government) that, as compared with the existing mail day, Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day for us. But they took up no impracticable posi-

tion. So far from this was our attitude, that in a letter written shortly afterwards to the Director General of the Post Office, we instructed the Secretary of the Chamber to say:—

“In conclusion, I am directed to say that my Committee feel sure that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce would reconsider their request for the continuance of a Wednesday mail day for Calcutta if it could be shown (as stated by Bombay) that the general public in India and at home would benefit by the mail being closed here on some other day.” But while charging the Committee with a want of consideration for the interests of other communities, our critics at the recent public meeting separated without its having occurred to any gentleman that the Saturday mail which the meeting adopted in order to conciliate Bombay, in preference to our choice of Friday, entails a Sunday mail day for our Madras friends. They not only overlooked the interests of Madras in fixing upon Saturday for the monsoon closing in Calcutta in order to meet the fancied wants of Bombay, but they forgot the fact that a Monday closing in Bombay during the monsoon months is no real hardship. We all know that Bombay trade during the monsoon comes almost to an end, and, indeed, one speaker at a recent meeting in Bombay went so far as to say,—“Exporters had to do all their work during

four months, and the rest of the time was practically holiday. Employés had almost as many days or even weeks as they chose." Perhaps this little incident may serve to show how difficult it is in this matter to reconcile all interests.

That we have endeavoured to reconcile all interests, I trust you will allow, and, further, that you will endorse the opinion of our action formed by the Director General of the Post Office who, when writing to us on the 1st March last said,— "I pointed out also (to the Bombay Chamber) that Calcutta interests, if taken by themselves, would point to a Monday departure from Bombay, which day would, I believe, accord with the estimate of British interests formed by the British Postal authorities, and that it was only out of deference to Bombay interests that the Calcutta Chamber was not pressing for a Monday departure. I considered this action of the Calcutta Chamber entitled the representations which it had made against Friday to all the more consideration."

I referred just now to the smallness of the Bombay trade during the monsoon months, and I think it would perhaps be useful to draw your attention to the total business of that port as compared with our own. It seems to me that in listening to the Bombay complainants of want of

time for mail work in the event of a Monday closing of the mails in Bombay, the Secretary of State for India, as well as our friends in Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and other towns have quite overlooked how far more onerous to Calcutta the present arrangement must prove.

Not only is the value of our export trade far larger (about half as much again) but we deal in a far greater variety of articles, and at the same time in articles of considerably larger bulk in proportion to value.

The figures of the past two years give the value of the Calcutta exports as Rs. 29,31,34,366 and Rs. 30,37,66,484 against 18,99,07,489 and Rs. 22,55,56,880 as that of Bombay.

In respect to bulk—setting aside the tonnage of steamers which is much the same for both ports, say a total for two years of 763,795 tons for Calcutta and 762,947 tons for Bombay—I find that in 1878-79 Calcutta loaded 533,930 tons of sailing tonnage, and in 1879-80, 558,273 tons, while Bombay could find cargo for only 75,412 and 73,398 tons during those years.

A far larger amount of tonnage went to Bombay, drawn there to some extent by the demand for coal for its mills and railways; but there being no cargo for it, no less than 590,000 tons of steam and sailing tonnage left Bombay in those two years to seek cargo elsewhere.

I am informed that there is very little prospect of our case being considered in regard to arrangements for 1881, but that as the arrangements for each year are quite independent of those of any other, I think we should put forward, as forcibly as we can, that our convenience, having regard to so important a trade, should be subordinate only to the convenience of the larger public at home, and that if a Monday mail day is inevitable at some place, the large trade of Calcutta,—a trade in a large variety of articles requiring more time for the preparation of the documents referring to it,—should not be burdened with it. Nor do I think that this correspondence, when posted, should be so detained in Bombay as to cause the delivery in London to be delayed upwards of 16 hours.

One word more, Gentleman. In order to meet what we understand to be the needs of Bombay, we consented to an earlier hour for the closing of our mails in Calcutta. I do not fancy this has proved a generally convenient arrangement. It was submitted to rather than have an earlier closing day, but I regret to notice from the Post Office Circular that, from the 7th February, we are not only to have the earlier day, but the earlier hour is to be continued. I would propose to bring this to the notice of the Postal author-

ities; but I would ask if your views coincide with mine upon the subject.

The Hon'ble Mr. Inglis said that he had much pleasure in supporting the adoption of the report, and in reference to what had fallen from Mr. Turner, he would say, as one of those who supported the amendment at the public meeting, he felt he owed an apology to the Committee for moving in a direction somewhat contrary to what they recommended. He did not, however, regret the resolution they arrived at, as he thought that the less they asked at present the more they were likely to get. At the same time, if he had had the report in his hand, and if he had known the care the Committee evidently took to form their opinion on the subject, he was not sure he would have spoken so freely as he had done, and he begged to apologise to the Committee for any seeming neglect he had shown for the care they had taken in the matter.

He thought Mr. Turner had brought out very forcibly the importance of the Calcutta trade, and that their convenience ought not to be sacrificed to the convenience of Bombay or of any other community in India, although they were quite willing that the convenience of the whole Indian public should be studied. He thought himself that they ought to agitate for

a morning departure of the mails from Bombay, and he felt satisfied that if they had had a morning departure last year this agitation would never have arisen—at all events at home. He felt certain that letters would have been delivered 24 hours earlier in London, had there been a departure of the steamer from Bombay on Saturday morning instead of Saturday evening and that their Wednesday mail day would have been continued to them. He felt strongly therefore that they should make a combined effort to get a morning departure of the steamer from Bombay during this year, so that they might see the effect of it before arrangements for the next year were made. If it was true, as the Postal authorities told them that there would be a saving of some 16 hours on the voyage were such a change made, he did not see why the Bombay community should object to the morning departure of the mails. If they chose they might write up to midnight and get up again at 4 a.m. on the morning of the steamer's departure, and go on until 8 o'clock, at which hour the Bombay mails should be closed. This would surely give them all the time they want, and would permit of the hour of the steamer's departure being fixed for 10 a.m. which would give a margin of 2 hours for the embarkation of mails and passengers after the

Calcutta letters reach Bombay, and would effect a saving of 2 hours at this one point as compared with present arrangements. By accelerating the speed somewhat on the voyage and avoiding detention in Egypt it would, as the Indian postal authorities show, be very easy to make up other 17 hours before the mails reached London, and letters posted here on Tuesday evening, in the fair season, would in this way be delivered in London that day 3 weeks in the morning, which is all the Home authorities ask for. He hoped the Committee would represent all this very strongly to the Government; and if the closing the mails here on Tuesday, in the fair season, together with a morning departure of the steamer from Bombay on Friday, results in a delivery of the mails in London before the time stipulated for, they would be in a position to ask hereafter for Wednesday in the fair season, and Tuesday during the monsoon. These days, he thought, they should aim at, and hope to get in another year.

The only other matter he wished to draw attention to was that of import duties. While agreeing entirely with what the President had stated on the subject, he thought there was an alternative which he had not referred to. The President had referred to three, stating that one of them namely, a return to the old

state of things, was unworthy of consideration. But he thought there was a fourth, and that was to levy a reduced rate of duty upon all classes of piece-goods. That he thought was the fairest solution of the difficulty. He quite agreed with those gentlemen who looked forward to free imports, but they all agreed that India could not lose these duties at present. Therefore, he thought, to meet the case fairly, the plan would be to re-impose duties upon a reduced scale upon goods which were now imported free, and reduce rates upon all other classes, so as to have them all upon the same footing. The objection to the President's proposal was that bleachers, dyers and printers would undoubtedly have grave cause for complaint if grey goods were admitted free and their special productions were taxed. The result in his opinion would be that a sense of inequality and unfairness would remain, which would not be removed until the duties were either entirely abolished or re-imposed on a reduced scale upon all classes of imported cotton goods.

Mr. G. Yule said that one could not look at the report of the Committee without being convinced that the Committee of the Chamber deserved the deepest thanks of the mercantile community of Calcutta. The report showed that the Committee had an unusual amount of work

before them during the past half-year, and also an extraordinary number of Government Bills to consider, and he would say that the work had been discharged with credit, wisdom, and ability; and the manner in which the work had been done showed that the Calcutta Chamber could fairly compare with some of the most distinguished Chambers of Commerce in the old country. The subjects introduced in the report under notice were all treated with that pre-eminent ability which they were all proud to recognise in the present President and Committee of the Chamber. The varied topics brought before them in the report, and the manner in which they had been handled, gave them a very clear conception of the earnest and arduous duties the Committee and the President had been prosecuting during the past six months.

In commenting upon the report, he would first refer to the import duty upon cotton goods. Now, he must say that he had seen no solution of this vexed question, except the one which the Chairman had himself suggested, and, as Mr. Yule gathered from his remarks, had partially supported. He did not mean a present abolition of the import duties upon all piece-goods, but what he wanted was a clear definite line by which both the Collector of Customs and the merchants

in Calcutta would be guided. In the President's suggestion, they had got a line about which there could be, he imagined, no misunderstanding whatever. Those who knew about piece-goods were aware that it was utterly impossible for a spinner to spin yarn always of the same number, and that it was customary to allow a margin, on either side of any given number, so that an order given for No. 30s. would be suitably executed if the actual numbers did not vary more than from 28s. to 32s. and he conceived it was throwing a most onerous task upon the Customs of defining what cannot in practice be defined.

Much blame had been cast upon the Collector for his action in the matter, but he thought that more blame had been cast on him than he really deserved. The Collector had a duty to discharge to the Government, and if he had been somewhat lax in his discipline, and allowed a certain quantity of yarn of 30s. to be introduced into piece-goods to the extent of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., it was perfectly obvious that, if the practice was once adopted, the system would soon be followed by an additional $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and after that was established there would be another $1\frac{1}{2}$, and the Collector would in time find 5 or 6 per cent. excess of finer yarns. He would then probably be brought face to face with the Government for dereliction of duty, and for exceeding the powers

conferred upon him by the Act. If any of them were in the same position as the Collector, what other action than that taken by him would they have adopted? At all events, it was better that the question should have been taken up by the Collector, and that the mercantile community should know their position in the matter. If the finances of the country could have afforded it, he would have said that the best solution of the difficulty would be the complete abolition of taxation; but he assumed that the finances of the country were not in such a satisfactory position as to admit of such a thing being done, and he thought that the next most satisfactory thing would be the suggestion of the Chairman, that all grey goods and yarns should be permitted to enter free.

He next wished to refer to the Factory and Labour Bill. He was not sure whether the President had referred to it, but he was glad to see the position which the Committee had taken up on this question. So far as he could gather, there was no other object for introducing a Labour and Factory Bill into India than the fact that they had such a Bill in England. His own conviction was that the less Government interfered between employer and the employed the better it would be for all classes. At present, he was sorry to say, that there seemed to be too

much interference, too much restriction, too much support. The best support they could have was the absence of interference.

One matter referred to by the Chairman was that of the Port Trust, and he had listened to his observations with much interest. He made some calculations some years ago with reference to the accounts of this most important Trust. He then endeavoured to show that this public body was deriving a revenue far in excess of what any public body should derive. He saw from the published accounts that, after paying interest upon debt and the sinking fund, the Trust had made a profit of 39 lacs. Now to his thinking, these 39 lacs were taken out of the pockets of the public unnecessarily, and the income would be sufficiently large if they were able to pay interest upon the amount borrowed and liquidate their debt in 30 years.

The only other point he wished to refer to was with reference to the question of the departure of the mails. He must say that, looking to the whole correspondence, the labour and attention that had been given to the subject by the Committee were very great. They seemed to have given a great deal of day-work and night-work to it, and he regretted exceedingly if any remarks he made at the recent public meeting should have

been felt to have thrown any reflection whatever upon the Committee.

Mr. G. H. Morrison trusted it would not be deemed presumptuous in him if he joined a distinguished ex-president in complimenting the Chairman upon his address. What appeared specially admirable in it was its thoroughly commercial and non-political character. Presidents of the Chamber, as was well-known, were accustomed to favour us with their own individual views on the topics of the day, and their utterances were received, and deservedly so, with considerable attention. He thought that, to others besides himself, it was a relief to find that the President's period of office so far furnished for comment no questions more burning than, for instance, cotton and petroleum. He regretted he still was unable to follow Mr. Yule in his views upon the action of the Committee in respect of the mails. The Committee had pointed out that the period between Sunday night and Tuesday night was insufficient for preparing our documents, and he could not understand how such a representation could be said to have justified the Government in giving us Monday.

He congratulated the Committee upon their action in opposing the attempt of the Port Commissioners to impose an additional charge on

shipping, under the plea that the Powder Magazine did not cover its expenses. That the amount in question (Rs. 5 per vessel) was trifling in itself, did but entitle the Committee to the greater thanks for the vigilance displayed. Unfortunately, it was not the only such attempt. Those of the Chamber who were consignees of vessels, and particularly of sailing ships, were aware that until 1874 Lloyd's and the other Registers gave but one tonnage for each vessel, namely, the net or registered tonnage. Up to that date, accordingly, the Port Commissioners followed the practice of the Government before them, and charged mooring hire on the net. Unfortunately for us, in 1874, Lloyd's began to state the gross tonnage of ships as well as the net, and, indeed, they also gave the builder's tonnage, and then it seemed to dawn on the Commissioners that there was an opening for raising their fees. Accordingly, without notice, and without any sort of sanction, the Commissioners commenced to charge mooring hire according to the gross.

We all know that in respect of marine charges Calcutta is the most expensive port in the East; a steamer which could cover its marine charges at Bombay for Rs. 650, and for not exceeding Rs. 500 in any other port, would in Calcutta have to pay not less than Rs. 1,500. No doubt, the excess cost of visiting Calcutta was partly due to the

length of the river and the consequently high piloting charge, but this circumstance only rendered it more incumbent on those administering our Port Trust to keep their fees within the Port itself as low as possible consistently with efficiency. Those whose avocations take them on the river cannot contemplate the long line of river wall with its jetties, sheds, tramways, hydraulic cranes, floating cranes, steam barges, fire engines, hoppers, and even steam yachts, without appreciating the praise bestowed by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor upon the untiring energy of the Vice-Chairman of the trust, but admiration for the *Hausmann* of the Hooghly is damped by the reflection that, when carried too far, these things cease to be of advantage to a port through their cost becoming a burden upon trade. Those who know Liverpool, with its miles of magnificent docks and palatial warehouses fitted up with all the appliances that engineering skill can produce at the call of capital, will remember also by how long a period, in Birkenhead across the Mersey, the provision for trade anticipated the commerce it was intended to attract. There docks were not long ago to be seen whose waters were never rippled by the keel of any vessel, whilst the grass grew between the stones of the dock quays, and the stranger wandered through streets and squares of houses, not only tenantless but unfinished, their

bare skeletons, windowless and roofless, pointing the moral of *festina lente*. In Liverpool itself the heavy dock charges, necessitated by the lavish expenditure of the Dock Board, had largely defeated the object with which the money was spent and had driven away business in lieu of attracting it. Mr. Morrison thought, with the speakers who had preceded him, that the considerable surplus annually shown in the port accounts furnished good ground for a strong representation to Government in favour of the reduction of the port charges, and that the time had come when any further works for the benefit of those who should succeed the present generation of merchants should be provided for by loans repayable by posterity. The possessors of cash balances, investments, and property reaching a value of nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ crore of rupees, and with an income of 18 lacs per annum, would find no difficulty in borrowing on the most favourable terms; and but a small portion of the annual surplus now shown would be required to meet the charges of interest, leaving the balance free to be applied in reduction of the charges on commerce, instead of as now, being thrown into the yawning jaws of iron, and the red abyss of bricks and mortar, which, like the chasm of Curtius of old, gaped in the midst of the community to receive the fruits of their labour.

The Chairman's motion was then put and carried unanimously.

The Chairman then proposed and Mr. J. W. O'Keefe seconded :—"That the Committee's conditional election of Messrs. Edwards Brothers and Co., and of Messrs. Sigg, Sultzor and Co. as members of the Chamber be confirmed."

The proposal was unanimously confirmed.

Mr. H. B. H. Turner gave notice that at the next general meeting of the Chamber he would move an amendment of the existing schedule in regard to the tonnage measurement of bales of cotton, jute, and other similarly packed articles, which according to the Chamber's schedule are 50 cubic feet to the ton, whereas by general custom and agreement 5 bales not exceeding 52 cubic feet constituted the measurement ton.

Mr. Turner was of opinion that the schedule should be in conformity with the custom of the port, and that the proposed amendment, of which he now gave notice, was necessary to protect those who, ignorant of the custom, might enter into agreements for the loading of vessels upon the Chamber's schedule, which agreements, as the schedule stood, would be found impracticable.

The meeting terminated with a unanimous vote of thanks to the Chairman.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of the Committee for the half-year
ended 31st October 1880.

The Committee submit their Report on the principal subjects which have had their attention during the past half-year.

IMPORT DUTY ON COTTON GOODS.

Members of the Chamber are aware of the great trouble and anxiety which the action of the Collector of Customs has caused to importers of cotton goods coming under the duty-free denomination. The correspondence given below shows the position the Committee have taken up in this matter, and they are glad to record that their views generally have been accepted by the Bengal Government. A recent communication, however, from the Government of India to the local Government, while in some respects satisfactory, still leaves the ground open for future disputes; and the Committee propose addressing the Government of India on the subject.

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From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 21st September 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to address you on the subject of the Sea Customs Act No. VIII of 1878, and of the Notification No. 59 of 13th March 1879, the working of which has become so intolerable that departmental orders are absolutely necessary to prevent the injustice which is being done to manufacturers and importers of cotton goods.

The Act, though found at first to work comparatively smoothly, could not be expected to provide for contingencies which have arisen under that notification, and its penal clauses could not have been designed to meet all cases which might subsequently occur; and therefore large discretionary power was vested in the Collector.

There seems, however, to be a tendency on the part of the Customs officials to suspect all Lancashire manufacturers of endeavouring to defraud the revenue; there may be dishonest manufacturers, but the Committee deny that a great majority deserve to be so considered. To visit with the same penalty those whose cloth shows a mere fractional percentage of fine yarn, and those whose attempt to defraud is obvious, cannot be justified: in the latter case the full penalty may justly be inflicted, but in the former the penalty of paying duty on the whole invoice would be an extreme punishment for the irregularity.

Any one conversant with the internal economy of a cotton mill must know how easily cops of yarn may get mixed; and as the most experienced eye cannot tell the difference between dutiable and duty-free weft, without

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such close examination as is impracticable without seriously impeding the work of the loom, it may well be that a portion of the finer counts might get woven into the cloth without detection. Again, contiguous rows of looms might be at work on different cloths, and the weaver to save himself the trouble of going to the cop room for a fresh supply, might, when near closing time, take a cop from his neighbour's basket to finish up with. In various other ways, and unknown to the manufacturer, a slight admixture occurs, and the consequences, under the present ruling of the Customs, are that instead of a fine, proportionate to the merits of the case, the manufacturer is liable to the entire confiscation of his goods. The Committee submit that no such penalty could possibly be intended to apply to mere acts of inadvertence or of accident; for if so, what, they ask, could be intended as punishment on conviction of deliberate fraud?

The following instances of the working of the Act, as interpreted by the Customs authorities, will be sufficient to show the nature of the hardships complained of.

5 bales per Steamer "Discoverer," each bale containing 100 pieces=500 pieces 28-in. 24 yards 4lb. Grey T. Cloth.

One bale containing 100 pieces was examined by the Customs (the other four bales having been previously delivered to buyers), and 24 pieces only were alleged to contain yarn finer than 30s., the remaining 76 pieces being passed as all right.

According to the certificate furnished by the Customs, the 24 pieces are said to contain fine weft, in patches,

varying from 8 inches to 4 yards in each piece, none of the pieces being entirely made of fine weft.

Taking 2 yards as the average of five yarns in each piece, the total length would be 240 yards, on which the duty would have amounted to about 7 annas altogether.

Ten leas were tested by the wrap-reel at the Custom House, one lea of over 30s, and one lea of under 30s yarn, from each of five different pieces with the following results:—

	1 lea.	1 lea.	1 lea.	1 lea.	1 lea.
Fine weft wrapped	32s-33s	35s-34s	34s	34s-35s	35s-36s
	1 lea.	1 lea.	2 leas.	1 lea.	
Coarse weft wrapped	24s	25s-26s	26s	27s-28s.	

A fine was imposed of Rs. 1,000, and the bale was confiscated, but was re-purchased for Rs. 250, making a total penalty of Rs. 1,250.

The following three cases relate to goods from one manufacturer:—

Case No. 1.—Ten bales ex Str. "Counsellor," each containing 400 pairs $9\frac{1}{2}$ yards Grey Dhooties.

One bale was retained at, and two were returned to, the Custom House. Seven bales had been delivered into the bazar when the Collector's application for them was received. Of 260 pairs examined for duty found to contain 55 yards of fine weft.

Case No. 2.—One bale ex Str. "City of Khios," containing 400 pairs $9\frac{1}{2}$ yards Grey Dhooties, retained at the Custom House. One hundred pairs were examined, and eight were "found to contain fine weft apparently throughout."

Case No. 3.—Six bales ex Str. "Mira," 5 containing each 400 pairs, and one 374 pairs $9\frac{1}{2}$ yards Grey Dhooties.

One bale was retained at the Custom House; five bales had been delivered into the bazar when the Collector's application for them was received. On examination of the one bale retained, "several pieces" were "found to contain yarn finer than 30s which, on testing by the wrap-reel, proves to range from 36s to 39s.

The results may be summarised as follows:—

	Case No. 1.	Case No. 2.	Case No. 3.
No. of yards in invoice	35,000	8,800	22,553
" " examined	2,470	950	*
" " alleged to be woven with fine weft	55	76	*
Percentage of fine weft to total weft	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	*
" " " cloth	1	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	*
" penalty to amount of duty leviable on fine weft	100,000	57,218	*
Amount of duty leviable on fine weft	Rs. 2-8	As. 12-7	*
Value of the goods	5,000 Rs.	450 Rs.	2,518
Penalty inflicted	2,500 "	450 "	1,425
Consisting of—Fine	1,000 "	"	1,000
Confiscation	1,500 "	450 "	425
Possible gain to the manufacturer if the fine weft were 30s instead of 30s	3s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	1s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
" If 40s. instead of 30s,	5s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	2s. 1d.	
	* Not ascertained.		

Affidavits were produced to prove that the manufacturer had bought specifically sufficient 30s weft to complete the goods, and that 30s were not required for any goods concurrently in process at his mill. Therefore the presumption, amounting almost to certainty, is that the 30s

supplanted by finer weft in the penalized goods were incorporated in goods on which duty has been paid. In this case it is obvious that the revenue has not suffered, nor the manufacturer benefited even to the infinitesimal extent possible on the assumption of fraudulent intent.

The following imaginary cases are submitted to illustrate the inequality which arises under the Collector's treatment of "all cases alike":—

A. One hundred hales, value Rs. 20,000, 99 of which have been delivered into the bazar before the detection of 3 per cent. of fine weft.

B. The same, but no hales delivered.

C. Five hales, value Rs. 1,000, none delivered; one per cent. of dutiable weft detected.

	A.	B.	C.
Value of consignments ...	Rs. 20,000	20,000	1,000
Duty leviable on fine weft...	30	30	8 Ans.
Penalty inflicted ...	1,300	21,000	2,000
Consisting of—Fine	1,000	1,000	1,000
Confiscation ..	200	20,000	1,000

Percentage of penalty to amount of duty leviable on fine weft ... " 4,000 70,000 4,00,000

In regard to these instances the Committee draw special attention to the exceedingly small proportion of fine yarns found in each parcel, and to the fact that the incorporation of this fine yarn in the cloth could not have saved the manufacturer anything in the cost of the goods, and also to the absurdly small amount of duty which would be leviable if the whole yardage of fine yarns was made chargeable with duty.

When the Committee in a late correspondence with the Collector of Customs, (as per copy annexed), agreed with him that an unqualified declaration ought to be made by the importer, they added that satisfactory explanations should be held sufficient to remit the responsibility attaching to wrong declarations; and the Collector promised to deal leniently with cases where it was clearly shown that mis-description or mis-statement was purely the result of clerical error or inadvertence; but instead of carrying out his promise he interprets the Act in its most rigorous sense.

Much stress is laid by the Collector on the Chamber's expressed concurrence in his view as to the obligations of importers. The Committee repeat that all proper-means for the careful protection of the Customs revenue are essential; but they must at the same time disclaim any intention of countenancing an absolute forfeiture of property except in proved cases of deliberate wrong-doing.

The above and similar cases, the Committee respectfully submit, should be classed as inadvertences; they are clearly the result of ignorance, or want of care, or of laziness on the part of a factory hand; and to make merchants or manufacturers responsible for such faults of a workman to the extent of the whole value of the goods is, the Committee submit, an application of the law which was not intended, and which cannot be supported with any show of justice.

The Collector has said that, as in no case has there been any ground for supposing that the merchant here has acted otherwise than *bond fide*, he must in fairness deal with all cases on the same lines; but it seems to the

Committee that the object of leaving such large discretionary power in his hands was that he should exercise it when necessary. In acting as he has done, the Collector has lost sight of the object he states he had in view, viz., to avoid inequalities in the penalties imposed, for he has confiscated all goods, whether the proportion of fine yarns was found to be 100 per cent. or the fraction only of 1 per cent.

Hitherto it has been assumed that the manufacturer can be held responsible, and that the importer will be able without difficulty to recover from him, but the case has not yet been tried, and it is by no means certain that he can be so held responsible. Be that, however, as it may, the Committee think that the Lancashire manufacturer is as much entitled to protection as the importer himself.

The Committee trust that a complete investigation will be made of the whole subject, with a view to a refund of the fines which, in their opinion, have been unjustly imposed, as well as of the value of all goods confiscated. Meanwhile they hope that orders will be issued to the Customs authorities to exercise the discretion which they possess, and to apportion the penalty in each case as it arises according to the nature of the offence, and thereby put an end to the wholesale confiscation which is now going on.

From Collector to Chamber,

No. 1494, 3rd May 1880.

I have the honor to request that you will ask the Committee of your Chamber to favor me with an expression

of their opinion as to the best means of overcoming a difficulty which has arisen between myself and certain importers of grey cotton piece-goods.

2. By a notification which appeared in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 2nd April, the Chief Customs authority, under the power given by Section 86, Act VIII, 1878, ordered that in the case of cotton piece-goods claiming free entry the bill of entry should contain a declaration to the effect that the goods contained no finer yarn than 30s.

3. Since it has been discovered that goods so declared (on the faith of certificates furnished by the manufacturer or factor) are frequently found to contain much finer yarns in larger or smaller proportions, importers have been introducing into their declarations qualifying terms, such as "to the best of our knowledge and belief," or "should the goods prove to contain finer yarn we are to pay duty under protest."

4. Apart from the legal aspect of the case, which I do not propose now to discuss, it will at once be evident that such a declaration conveys in itself that there is at least a doubt in the mind of the importer that his goods are not entitled to free entry. Under such circumstances, and with a view to the necessary protection of the Government Revenue, the examination of a parcel of goods must inevitably be most searching. This would, in my opinion, lead to much annoyance and loss to the importer himself, and cause great delay in the Customs House to the inconvenience of the public generally, for if such declarations are accepted generally, and the entire onus of the question of free or dutiable goods is thrown on the

Appraising Department, there cannot but result great delay both in respect of cotton goods as well as of general merchandize.

5. I am therefore of opinion that such qualified declarations from a commercial point of view are undesirable, as importers, under the latter clause of Section 29, Act VIII, 1878, have every facility for ascertaining what yarns their goods are made of, and that an importer should take ordinary precautions to protect himself from the penalties of mis-description, and I should be glad to know if the Chamber of Commerce has any reason to dissent from the view I have taken.

6. I shall be obliged by the favor of an early reply.

From Chamber to the Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 11th May 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration your letter No. 1494 of the 3rd instant, and they direct me to express their concurrence in the view you take of the subject brought to notice.

They are of opinion that an importer of merchandise of any description should be in a position to specifically declare its character, quality, and value, and that there should be no necessity for any qualified declaration, except under exceptional circumstances, such as the inadvertent absence of invoices, or certificates, or other requisite means of correctly describing the contents of packages in bills of entry.

If an importer fails to adopt ordinary precautions to protect himself against the penal provisions of the Customs

Act, the inconvenient consequences are clearly attributable to his own neglect; if he suffers by the misrepresentations of others he has his remedy against them; but in either case it appears to the Committee that it is only reasonable and proper that the Government revenue should be carefully protected.

Whilst giving this opinion, the Committee desire to remind you that, in making declarations, mistakes, such as clerical errors, may frequently occur through no fault of the importer or of the manufacturer, and in such cases they hope that any satisfactory explanation given will be held sufficient to remit the responsibility attaching to such wrong declarations.

From Collector to Chamber,—

No. 1613, 13th May 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, for which I am obliged.

2. I fully recognise the importance of the opinion expressed in your last paragraph, and am always prepared to deal leniently with cases where it is clearly shown that mis-description or mis-statement is purely the result of clerical error or inadvertence.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber,—

No. 651T. Darjeeling, the 25th September 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 21st September 1880, with its enclosures, representing the hardship to which manufacturers and importers of cotton piece-goods are subjected,

by the arbitrary application of the penal clauses of the Sea Customs Act VIII. of 1878, by the Customs authorities, in cases coming under the notification of the Government of India No. 59 of the 13th March 1879.

In reply, I am to forward, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, the accompanying copy of a Resolution, dated the 24th September 1880, by this Government, on the subject, and to say that it was issued before the receipt at head-quarters of your letter under acknowledgment. The Chamber will observe that the Lieutenant-Governor has held that the penalties of confiscation and fine need only be imposed in extreme cases, but that duty is leviable in cases where the requirements of the Government of India Notification of 13th March 1879 are not fully complied with.

RESOLUTION

Read the following:—

1. Letter from Messrs. Williamson Brothers, without date, received on the 26th June 1880, appealing against an order of the Board of Revenue, confirming an order of the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, confiscating certain cotton piece-goods imported by the appellants.
2. Letter from the Board of Revenue, No. 560B, dated 22nd July 1880, reporting on the foregoing.
3. Endorsement from the Government of India, in the Department of Finance and Commerce, dated 31st July 1880, forwarding, for disposal, a letter from Messrs. Carlisles, Nephews & Co.,

dated the 17th July 1880, appealing against the orders of the Board in a similar case to the above.

4. Letter from the Board of Revenue, No. 654B, dated the 31st August 1880, reporting on the foregoing.
5. Letter from Messrs. Williamson Brothers, dated the 6th August 1880, in continuation of their former representation (No. 1 above)
6. Letter from the Board of Revenue, No. 714B, dated 18th September 1880, with reference to the foregoing.
7. Letter from Messrs. Carlisles, Nephews & Co., dated 9th September 1880, in continuation of their former representation (No. 3 above).

UNDER the Government of India Notification, No. 59 of the 13th March 1879, certain descriptions of cotton grey piece-goods, "shown to the satisfaction of the Customs Collector, whose decision shall be final, to be of the dimensions, weights, counts and quantities now generally known under those descriptions, and to contain no yarn of a higher number than 30s," were exempted from import duty.

2. By section 29 of the Customs Act, every importer is bound to state in his bill-of-entry "the real value, quantity, and description of the goods imported by him, to the best of his knowledge and belief," and must "sign a declaration of the truth of such statement at the foot of such bill." The Collector has, under the same section, power to require the production of any invoice or other

document whereby the real value, quantity, or description of the goods can be ascertained, and to call upon the importer to furnish any information in his possession relative to these points. But if the importer declares that he is unable, from want of full information, to state the real value or contents of any case, package, or parcel of goods, then the Customs Collector is bound to permit him, *previous to the entry thereof*, to open the goods and examine the contents in presence of an officer of Customs, after which the importer must, under the first part of the section, fill in his own bill-of-entry. The Customs authorities are in no way responsible for, and ought not, under any circumstances, to accept, the responsibility for the correct filling in of the bill-of-entry. Their duty is to check the statements in the bill-of-entry, and to satisfy themselves, by evidence or by examination, that the particulars given by the importer are correct, and to assess duty or grant free passes accordingly.

3. Under section 86 of the Act, the Board of Revenue, as the chief Customs authority, are empowered to prescribe in respect of any class of goods such additional particulars, in addition to those specified in section 29, as they may think it necessary to have in the bill-of-entry; and under section 107, clause 37 (b) and (c), if it be found that the contents of any package have been wrongly described in the bill-of-entry (as drawn up with reference to section 86), whether as regards the denominations, characters, or conditions according to which such goods are chargeable with duty; or if the contents of such packages have been mis-stated in regard to sort, quality, quantity, or value, and such circumstance is not

accounted for to the satisfaction of the Customs Collector, the packages and goods are liable to confiscation, and every person concerned in the offence is liable to a penalty not exceeding Rs. 1,000. In the case of piece-goods claiming free entry under the Government of India notification of the 13th March 1879, the Board have ordered, under section 86, that there must be a specific declaration in the bill-of-entry that the goods contained no yarn of a higher number than 30s. This is clearly an order that the Board were legally empowered to give; and that it was, under the circumstances of the piece-goods market, a proper order, appears to be admitted by the Chamber of Commerce, to whom the Collector of Customs referred the point. The Chamber of Commerce wrote—

"They are of opinion that an importer of merchandise of any description should be in a position to specifically declare its character, quality, and value, and that there should be no necessity for any qualified declaration, except under exceptional circumstances, such as the inadvertent absence of invoices or certificates, or other requisite means of correctly describing the contents of packages in bills-of-entry. If an importer fails to adopt ordinary precautions to protect himself against the penal provisions of the Customs Act, the inconvenient consequences are clearly attributable to his own neglect; if he suffers by the misrepresentations of others, he has his remedy against them; but in either case, it appears to the Committee that it is only reasonable and proper that the Government revenue should be carefully protected."

4. Strictly speaking, the Customs Collector is bound to satisfy himself, before any imported goods leave his

custody, either that they are really duty-free, or that they have been properly assessed to duty under the Tariff Act. But in order to meet the convenience of the firms trading in piece-goods, the practice has been to allow the importer, upon his making the declaration in his bill-of-entry that the goods contain no yarns of higher number than 30s, to remove at once, without inspection, all the bales of the consignment covered by the bill, with the exception of one bale, selected at random, which is kept for examination. The importer, for his own convenience, agrees in fact to stand by the results of the examination of the specimen bale. If this is found to correspond with the description in the bill-of-entry, the whole consignment is passed free without further question. If any of the pieces in the bale are found to contain fine yarn, the importer is requested to return for further examination the bales already delivered. It frequently happens, however, that the importers have already made these over to buyers, and are not in a position to return them.

5. In the cases of the appellants, and recently in many other similar cases, the examination of the test-bales has resulted in the discovery of pieces containing patches, varying in length from a few inches to over 38 yards, made of yarn of higher numbers than 30s. In some instances, whole pieces made of such finer yarn have been discovered. The Customs Collector, considering, under these circumstances, that the goods had been misdescribed as containing no yarn finer than 30s, has usually confiscated the bales which he had in his possession, giving importers, under section 183, the option of taking

delivery on payment of a fine, and called upon them to return for examination the bales removed by them. On their failure to return these, a fine under section 167, clause 37, has been inflicted as a sort of set-off, the reasonable presumption being that these bales also would have been liable to confiscation.

6. On behalf of the appellants it is urged that the occurrence of small patches of finer web in duty-free piece-goods is entirely the result of accident; that when goods of different wets are being woven in the same shed, it is quite possible for some of the "cops" of finer yarn to get mixed up with the coarser; that this carelessness is no advantage to the manufacturer, as it injures the uniform character of his goods, and he only gets the price of coarse material for the piece into which the fine yarn is woven. It is further argued that the penalty of confiscation is only intended for cases of undoubted fraud, and that the Customs authorities ought to determine, before the completion of the bill-of-entry, whether goods are entitled to be admitted duty-free, so as to give the importer certainty in filling up his bill-of-entry.

7. On the other hand, the Customs authorities hold that if they, for the convenience of the trade, relax the system of examination of goods, they must, for the protection of the revenue, retain in their hands a strong deterrent against abuse of the advantage, and be allowed to inflict appreciable penalties in cases of detected misdescription. In the cases under notice it is admitted that the importer here is not to blame, the misdescription being given on the faith of the advices and invoices of the home manufacturer. Hence the Customs authorities are always ready to give the importer certificates, in

cases of confiscation, upon which he can and in some instances has recovered from the manufacturers. It is shown that under section 167, clause 37 (b) and (c), the Collector has not to decide upon the intention of the person wrongly describing the goods. Confiscation may be inflicted as a penalty for misdescription, whether arising from fraud or carelessness. The case of Mohendro Nath Dutt appears to have been treated by the Customs authorities as a kind of test-case. It was referred by the Collector to experts in the trade, and a copy of their report is attached to this Resolution. It is now stated that the total amount of fine weft in this case was 10½ yards to a bale of 2,000 yards. In no case has confiscation been imposed as a penalty where the amount of admixture has been less than this. It must also be borne in mind, with reference to the question of the manufacturer's intentions, that the Customs authorities are not in a position to judge of these; and it is urged, on their behalf, that the amount of admixture is in many instances so large as to make it quite impossible to attribute it to anything but intention or the grossest form of carelessness; and that it is by no means improbable that the intention may be to test the character of the Customs examination, with a view to passing in dutiable goods hereafter. Circumstances have occurred at times which make this last supposition anything but unreasonable, and it is a contingency which the Customs authorities must at least bear in mind. The manufacturer, knowing well the orders of the Indian Government, is bound to exercise due care in his manufacture; and though it may be unfortunate that he should only be reached through the importer, no other course is open to the Customs authorities here.

8. On considering all the facts and arguments, the Lieutenant-Governor feels bound to decide that the Customs Collector and Board of Revenue have been technically and legally right in their procedure throughout. The importer is bound to make an unqualified declaration in his bill-of-entry. The Customs Collector is not at liberty to decide, before entry, whether goods are free or dutiable. Confiscation and fine may be imposed for misdescription, without there being any positive proof or even suspicion of fraud. But, at the same time, the Lieutenant-Governor does not think that it is necessary or desirable to impose severe penalties as a matter of course in every case, such as those now under notice. The Revenue can be sufficiently protected by other means.

9. If importers wish to see the present system of quick delivery on the faith of an unqualified declaration in the bill-of-entry and the subsequent examination of a test-bale maintained, they must consent to stand by the results of the examination of that bale, and must make such arrangements with the manufacturers as will secure them from loss by mistakes or otherwise. If, then, the sample bale is found to contain *any* admixture of fine yarn of higher numbers than 30s, the goods are, both under the terms of section 21 of the Act and of the Government notification of 13th March 1879, undoubtedly liable to duty, and the whole consignment which that bale represents ought to be charged with duty. In the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion it would, in ordinary cases, be quite sufficient to assess the goods as dutiable. The penalties of confiscation and fine should be reserved for those cases in which the admixture of fine yarns is so great as to warrant the inference of bad faith or gross care-

lessness. The Lieutenant-Governor is disposed to hold that, if the amount of fine yarn in the bale is over 2 per cent., or if an entire piece of fine material is discovered, the case calls for the infliction of some penalty, though not necessarily the full penalty allowed by section 167, clause 37. The Collector should insist on the payment of duty as a matter of course, and inflict penalty with reference to all the circumstances of the case, using a just discretion.

10. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the Board of Revenue should now pass fresh orders in the cases under appeal, in accordance with the principles laid down in the foregoing paragraph, and they are at liberty to decide any similar representations in the same way. They can remit any penalties already imposed where these are not in harmony with the orders now passed. If importers are not satisfied with this arrangement, they can leave their consignments for examination before delivery in accordance with the strict requirements of the law. The Collector would, of course in that case, on discovering any admixture of fine yarns in a bale, examine all the bales of that consignment, unless duty were paid without further demur.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Board of Revenue for information and guidance, and communication to the Collector of Customs.

Also that a copy be forwarded to Messrs. Carlises, Nephews & Co., and Messrs. Williamson Brothers, with reference to their letters quoted at the heading of the Resolution.

Also that a copy, with copies of the Board's letters quoted in the heading, be submitted to the Government of India, in the Department of Finance and Commerce.

*Report on Mohendro Nath Dutt's case, drawn up by
Customs Collector and signed by experts.*

On receipt of the Board's order, Mohendro Nath Dutt was requested to attend at the Custom House, and on doing so was allowed to select a piece of cloth for examination. The yarn was unravelled, and sealed up in the presence of himself or persons chosen by him. By some chance he had selected a piece in which all except a very insignificant portion of the yarn was undoubtedly 30s. This led to a strict examination of all the 50 pieces in the bale, and it was discovered that 14 pieces out of the 50 were clearly woven of yarn, in some places 30s, and in others of much finer yarn, which would at once disqualify them for free entry, and portions of the latter were also unravelled. I then requested Messrs. Craik, of Williamson Brothers, and O'Keefe, of Kettlewell, Bullen & Co., gentlemen whose character is beyond question, to attend at the Custom House on Monday, 24th November, at which time Mohendro Nath Dutt accompanied by Mr. Turbull, also an impartial and skilled expert of similar character, were present. These gentlemen saw the yarn which had been unravelled from the piece selected on behalf of Mohendro Nath Dutt tested by the wrap-roll, and, as I have said before, it was found to be of 30s. These gentlemen also examined the pieces of cloth in which there was a mixture of yarn of 30s, and yarns finer than 30s, and yarn of the latter description unravelled from these cloths; and the introduction of the yarn finer than 30s, and the fineness of the yarn was so unmistakable and clearly defined, that they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied, without resorting to the test of the wrap-roll, that the cloths were not such

as could come in under the designation of goods containing no yarn finer than 30s, and that the yarns were much finer than 30s. Mr. Turnbull was inclined to think that the introduction of the finer yarn (*in the extreme case* amounting to three yards two feet in $38\frac{1}{2}$ yards) was not necessarily intentional or wilful. Messrs. Craik and O'Keefe were not prepared to go so far, considering that the amount of carelessness in manufacture was violently improbable and most discreditable to the manufacturer. I have shewn this statement of facts to these gentlemen, and they have certified to its correctness.

Signed by { W. CRAIK,
J. W. O'KEEFE,
R. TURNBULL.

The 24th November 1879.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.
Calcutta, 5th October 1880.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 631T, dated 25th September, with copy of a Resolution on the subject of the working of the Sex Customs Act VIII. of 1878, in connection with the Notification No. 59 of the 13th March, 1879.

The Committee observe with satisfaction that the Lieutenant-Governor, although judging that under the provisions of the Act the Collector of Customs and the Board of Revenue have been *technically* and *legally* right in the procedure against which they appealed, has ruled that the penalties of fine and confiscation need only be imposed in extreme cases; His Honor seems, however,

to hold that duty should be levied in all cases where goods are found to contain *any* admixture of yarn finer than 30s; that if the amount of light yarn in a bale is over 2 per cent, or if an equive piece of fine material is discovered, there should further be the infliction of a fine, and that cases warranting the inferences of bad faith or gross carelessness should be visited by the extreme penalties of fine and confiscation.

The Committee hope to be able to convince the Lieutenant-Governor that this ruling, although to an important extent modifying the intolerable hardships of which they complained, will still result in great injustice being done to importers or manufacturers, who, under it, must often suffer more or less severely from the results of pure accident which no amount of care could prevent.

The Collector of Customs has put much stress upon an opinion expressed by the Committee, that an importer should be in a position (except under exceptional circumstances) to specifically declare the character and quality of his merchandise, but unfortunately the qualifying clause at the end of the letter from which the quotation has been given, and his own reply, have apparently been lost sight of.

The letter in question ended with the following para:—
“Whilst giving this opinion, the Committee desire me to remind you that, in making declarations, mistakes, such as clerical errors, may frequently occur through no fault of the importer or of the manufacturer, and in such cases they hope that any satisfactory explanation given will be held sufficient to remit the responsibility attaching to such wrong declarations.”

And in reply, the Collector wrote:—"I fully recognise the importance of the opinion expressed in your last paragraph, and am always prepared to deal leniently with cases where it is clearly shown that mis-description or mis-statement is purely the result of clerical error or inadvertence."

At the time of giving this opinion, no such cases as those with which the Collector has recently dealt had come under the notice of the Committee, and they could hardly have foreseen that such were likely to occur, otherwise they would have considered it requisite to qualify, in a more decided manner, their opinion in regard to the importer's duty to declare the character of his goods, and the necessity for the Collector to use a wise discretion.

The Collector, however, did this himself, for the word "inadvertence," which he has used, would certainly apply to most of the cases in which he has lately inflicted the fullest penalties which the law permitted, even had those cases been of deliberate and proved fraud.

The Act provides that when the importer is unable, from want of full information, to state the real value or contents of any case, the Collector is bound to permit him, "previous to the entry thereof," to examine the contents in the presence of an officer of Customs. This permission, however, becomes of little or no value when by accident a small admixture of fine yarn has found its way into the cloth, because the mistake might easily escape the eye of the importer and yet be discovered subsequently by the appraiser; and as this officer has to be present at this examination, the Committee do not

see why he should not, under such circumstances, then decide whether the goods are dutiable or free.

Section 167, Clause 37 (b) and (c), provides penalties for wrong description or mis-statement in bill-of-entry, *if such is not accounted for to the satisfaction of the Collector*; but this qualifying clause has, in recent procedure, been entirely ignored, for the system has been to treat all cases alike—quite irrespective of the circumstances and of the explanation given. In the language of commerce it is no mis-statement to declare goods to be made of 30s if the quantity of finer yarn in them is within the margin which the accidents inseparable from manufacture render unavoidable.

The Committee believe it to be in the interests of importers that the present system of quick delivery should be maintained, and that they should stand by the results of the examination of a test bale, and they are most desirous that the Government revenue should be carefully protected; but they maintain that this should not be at the expense of the importer or manufacturer whose cloth, unknown to him, may contain here and there an accidental admixture of datiable yarns.

How this accidental admixture may occur has been fully detailed in the Chamber's letter of 21st September, and the Committee would only add that even the finding in a bale a whole piece, or pieces, woven entirely with fine yarns does not necessarily imply that a fraud was intended, because when different kinds of goods are being packed in the same warehouse it has not unfrequently happened that they have got mixed; but in such cases the Collector should have no difficulty in determining

whether the circumstances were accidental or otherwise. The Committee cannot press too strongly the fact, that to be of any benefit to the manufacturer in cheapening the cost of his cloth, the admixture of fine yarns must be of an important extent, and that even then he runs the risk of getting the cloth rejected by the purchaser at home, who of course will not willingly receive goods of irregular or thinner texture than he has contracted for.

In the so-called "test case," the value of the fine yarn introduced was about one penny less than the 30s which it displaced, and only 3½ pds duty would have been leviable on the whole quantity of the finer yarn. The Committee cannot concur in any opinion which regards these trifling irregularities as implying fraudulent intent, and cannot agree that any moderation has been shown which is based on the assertion that no goods have been confiscated for a smaller admixture.

The Lieutenant-Governor rules that if the sample bale is found to contain any admixture of yarn of higher numbers than 30s, the whole invoice is undoubtedly liable to duty, both under Section 21 of the Act, and under the Notification of 13th March 1879; and under this ruling the Collector has already taken action in the following cases which have just been brought to the notice of the Committee:—

Case A:—50 bales Grey Shirtings ex S. S. "Vega."
No. 6452 = 25 pieces = 1,257 yards examined; 1 piece of 25 yards contained 43 inches of fine warp; 2 bales returned 42½%.

Case B:—25 bales Grey Shirtings ex S. S. "Vega."
No. 6559 = 125 pieces = 2,507 yards examined; 15 pieces of 25 yards contained 30 yards of fine warp; 2 bales returned 42½%.

In case A, out of 1,950 yards examined it would thus appear that only 18 inches, or .023 per cent, and in case B

out of 3,000 yards only 20 yards 31 inches, or .535 per cent, have been found to contain fine yarns; and for this infinitesimal admixture, the result, undoubtedly, of inadvertence, the Collector has imposed duty-penalties of Rs. 547-14-0 and Rs. 284-14-0, respectively; thus showing that the orders issued by His Honor, although intended to mitigate the penalties, have actually resulted in the infliction of a punishment for accidents so unimportant that they would before have been passed over.

His Honor is disposed to hold, that if the amount of fine yarn in a bale is over 2 per cent, or if an entire piece made of the finer material is discovered, some penalty, in addition to duty, is called for; but the Committee respectfully urge that in both cases they have shown that the mistake might be of so purely accidental a nature as not to call for any punishment.

The penalties of confiscation and fine in cases warranting the inference of bad faith are not, the Committee think, too severe; but to place gross carelessness in the same category as fraud is, they submit, a mistake; gross carelessness undoubtedly deserves some punishment, but if the object be to prevent its recurrence, a much less severe one than confiscation (which is the extreme penalty for fraud) would have an equally good effect and be more suited to the circumstances.

In conclusion, the Committee respectfully suggest that some modification of the law or of its interpretation is required to meet the peculiar circumstances which have arisen; that the Collector should not be obliged to insist on the payment of duty as a matter of course, and that he should be instructed to regulate his penalties

with reference to all the circumstances of each case, and to use that just discretion which His Honor has suggested, and which would appear of late to have been so entirely forgotten.

They would, moreover, submit, with reference to the permission given in the 10th paragraph of the Resolution to the Board of Revenue to remit any penalties already imposed, that those orders be made peremptory, and that the amounts that have been paid in the shape of duty, fine, or confiscation should, in all cases where fraud was evidently never attempted, be returned.

Chamber of Commerce.

Manchester, 5th October 1880.

MY LORD MARQUIS.—On behalf of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, I respectfully beg to call attention to the hardship inflicted on many of its members, both merchants and manufacturers, by the manner in which the Customs authorities of Calcutta have for some time past proceeded to carry out the Sea Customs' Act, No. 8 of 1878, in connection with the notification No. 59 of 13th March 1879, which provides for the admission free of duty of grey cotton goods made of yarns not finer than 30s warp and weft. The Directors of this Chamber need hardly assure your Lordship that they have no sympathy with those who would knowingly defraud the Government by attempting to pass as duty free goods not fairly so entitled under the above named provision, or that nothing would induce them to advocate any mitigation of penalties, however severe, with which such malpractices might be visited, but they desire to point out that in a

trade of so great detail as the manufacturing and packing of cotton goods, it is impossible always to avoid mistakes, and that for were inadvertence it appears to them that confiscation of the goods or the levying of a fine equal thereto, is a course of procedure so harsh as not to accord with the treatment usually received by the English people at the hands of Government. In illustration of the cases to which I refer, and to the liability to slight mistakes on the part of the makers and shippers of cloth, I beg to hand the accompanying communications from members of the Chamber of the highest standing summarising instances of the procedure to which I refer, and regarding which unsuccessful appeals have been made to the Board of Inland Revenue at Calcutta. The original documents referred to will be found in that office, but I shall have pleasure in obtaining copies, if desired. Many of these are already in the possession of the Chamber, and have been fully considered by a committee specially chosen for the purpose of investigating the circumstances connected with the cases in question, which I may further remark are only a few of the number reported. On the perusal of the summaries referred to, your Lordship, I venture to think, will share the opinion that there has been no intention to defraud the Government, and that the admixture of fine yarns in some pieces has arisen accidentally from the fact that the manufacturers were at one and the same time making cloths of 30s yarns for India, and in the same weaving shed, probably other cloths very similar in appearance, but of finer yarns, either to meet a continuing demand for such duty-paying goods in India, or for shipment to China and other Eastern markets. In other cases it will be seen, as instanced

in the communication from Messrs. Ralli Brothers, that whole pieces, probably a few only, of dutiable goods have inadvertently been packed by the shipper amongst others intended to pass duty free. It is particularly worthy of notice that the admixture, whether of fine yarns in the same piece or of dutiable with duty free goods in the same package, has been to so small an extent as, if undetected, could have effected so inappreciable a saving to the manufacturer or shipper as would make it not worth while his running the risk of attempting to defraud. I respectfully beg to submit that even where culpable negligence is apparent the requirements of the case would be met either by levying the ordinary duty, or in instances of gross negligence by the imposition of, say double duty. I am not unmindful of the difficulties that must often attend the arriving at a conclusion as to whether the circumstances point to a wilful attempt at fraud or to accident, and to meet this difficulty I respectfully suggest that a committee of experts should be appointed in Calcutta, chosen from the mercantile community as having special knowledge of the trade. Such a committee, I may remark, was, at the instance of this Chamber, appointed to assist in the introduction of the Trade Marks' Act of 1873, with results which, I believe, were alike satisfactory to the Home Government, and, on the whole, to the commercial community. While suggesting the course just named for the purpose of investigating the cases of confiscation and of equivalent fines that have already occurred, and for the settlement of pending or immediate cases, I hope I may be permitted to remind your Lordship that this Chamber foresaw the very difficulty that has now arisen so far back as March 1878,

when a representation on the subject was made to your Lordship's then predecessor, the Marquis of Salisbury and it is the special desire of the Directors that I avail of the present opportunity to impress on your Lordship the extreme desirableness of the total and early abolition of the import duties on cotton goods, in favour of which they have so often and so earnestly appealed.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Marquis, your Lordship's obedient, humble servant,

B. ARMITAGE,

President.

The Most Hon. the Marquis of Hartington,

Secretary of State for India.

From Government of India to the Government of Bengal, No. 3968. Simla, the 3rd December 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt with your endorsement No. 613T, dated 24th September 1880, of a Resolution by the Government of Bengal upon certain complaints about the action of the Calcutta Custom House, in regard to the customs duty on cotton grey

• No. 2956-1847, dated 7th October 1880. piece-goods, and of
 No. 0037, dated 26th October 1880. your subsequent communications on the
 No. 11807, dated 9th November 1880.

same subject.

2. The principal subject of complaint is the levy of full duty, and also penalties, on certain goods which, though declared to contain no yarn of a higher number than 30s, were found, on examination, to contain patches of

finer yarn. Complaint is also made of the extent to which partial tests have been held to govern the liability of whole consignments to duty, confiscation, and fine.

3. The Government of India concurs with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in thinking that duty must be paid on any cloth which indisputably contains finer yarn than 30s, even in small quantities. But in determining whether cloth does contain finer yarn, due allowance should be made for the custom of the trade as to the numbering and testing of yarn. It is extremely difficult to spin yarn either of perfectly even thickness or to the exact number intended, and it is believed that it is the practice, when part of an order turns out coarser, to make up the right "number" by spinning the rest finer than the number ordered. So long as the buyer gets the right weight and the right number of yards to his bundle, &c., a variation of one or two numbers each way within the denomination is not much regarded. Weavers, who deal with raw yarn, usually wrap seven as a "skein," that is to say, a whole hank at a time, and take the average. In Custom-house testing, where the yarn must first be unravelled from the piece, this cannot be done; but a reasonable allowance for variations of a number or two each way should, in the opinion of His Honor the President in Council, be made before it is held that goods are intentionally made of yarn of a higher number than 30s.

4. As to the levy of penalties, the President in Council agrees in the view that the Collector has not to decide upon the intention of the person wrongly describing the goods, and that the imposition of the penalties allowed by the law cannot be confined to cases in which fraud is established. It is necessary, for the protection of the revenue,

that the Collector should be free to inflict a penalty in any case in which a misdescription is not accounted for to his satisfaction. But, on the other hand, penalties should not be imposed indiscriminately, in every case of misdescription. A wide discretion is left to the Collector by Section 167, Clause 37, of the Sea Customs Act, and in ordinary cases of misdescription it will suffice simply to levy duty upon the goods.

5. Besides the varying circumstances of particular cases, there are certain considerations, such as the general scope and intention of the exemption, and the custom of the trade, which should influence the Collector in deciding whether or not to impose penalties. If goods declared to contain no yarn finer than 20s. are substantially such as the law intended to exempt, it would be harsh to levy any penalty, merely because they contain, through accident or carelessness, a little finer yarn. In such a case, the explanation that the declaration was made on the strength of a manufacturer's certificate, and that the admixture of finer yarn was accidental, should, in the absence of any special circumstances telling the other way, be accepted; and the President in Council is not prepared to say that the discovery of even more than 2 per cent. of finer yarn in such goods would necessitate a penalty. On the other hand, if the goods so declared are found to be made wholly of yarn finer by even one number than 30s, or of finer yarn so blended with exempted numbers as to affect their general character, nothing short of the clearest demonstration that the declaration was *bona fide* should avert confiscation and fine.

6. Having regard to the somewhat indefinite nature of the allowance to be made, in accordance with the custom

of the trade before mentioned, the President in Council has no doubt that many cases must arise in which, though it may not be "shown to the satisfaction of the Collector that the goods contain no yarn of a higher than 30s," and duty must, therefore, be levied, it would not be right to impose any penalty for misdescription.

7. The President in Council finds it difficult to suppose that the irregularity most prominently discussed in these papers, namely, the presence, in patches, of a certain quantity of yarn unmistakably finer than 30s can be intentional. If the object were to economise cotton by the use of size, the finer yarn would be more systematically blended, so as to lessen the chance of the fraud being discovered; and, doubtless, in Calcutta, as elsewhere, purchasers look much to smoothness of surface and evenness of texture. Patchy goods bring the maker's name into disrepute, and fetch so much less than those of uniform make and texture as to more than counterbalance any possible gain from additional sizing. They probably cost less to make, and meet a demand among classes who cannot afford to pay for a better article: but it is improbable that they are deliberately manufactured in order to profit by the exemption; and, when it is found that their irregularity subjects them to duty, their character will be altered, or they will no longer be imported. In this connection I am to say, with reference to your letter No. 1100T, dated 9th instant, that the cloth of the best makers is, naturally, most free from flaws, but, so long as there are good and bad workmen, and good and bad management, patchy goods will doubtless be manufactured.

8. It has been ascertained that these principles have been applied in the Bombay Custom House, and that no

complaints have arisen there of the administration of the law. The penal clauses of the Act have been applied in only one or two cases, when small fines have been imposed as a check upon want of due care in making declarations.

9. As regards the second ground of complaint recited in paragraph 2, the practice at Bombay differs from that at Calcutta, in that it is the exception, and not the rule, to allow any part of a consignment to leave the Custom House before the necessary tests have been applied. The President in Council does not wish to lay down any hard-and-fast rule on the subject, but he considers that, as far as possible, the same procedure should be followed at Calcutta. In Bombay, consignments are generally passed within two days of the presentation of documents, and importers are usually willing to wait that time for delivery. Under this procedure, if the regular test discloses any admixture of fine yarn, all further enquiries and tests necessary to determine the exact nature of the consignment are made before any of the goods are set free; and importers have the opportunity of showing that the presence of dutiable yarn is accidental, or results from wrong packing or marking, or is limited to certain bales or certain pieces only. In such cases it might not always be necessary to examine all the bales of a consignment, or to levy duty on a whole consignment, merely because one bale contains finer yarn than 30s; for, if a sufficient number of other bales were examined, all of which were found correct, so that a *prima facie* probability was established that the mistake was limited to a small number of bales only, it would be proper to allow the importers the option of either having the remaining bales tested, or paying duty on a portion of the entire consignment proportionate to the ratio borne by

the one dutiable bale discovered to the whole number of bales tested.

10. But if it be necessary, for the convenience of the importers, to allow any consignment to be removed from the Custom House before examination, the President in Council considers that it should be (as is implied, though not expressly ordered, in the Resolution of the Government of Bengal) on the distinct understanding that, if the test bales turn out dutiable, duty must be paid, without demur, on the whole consignment to which they belong. Goods which have once left the Custom House should never be brought back for examination. By this procedure any complaint that the "accident of delivery by importers to purchasers determines the amount of the penalty" would be altogether obviated.

11. On the whole case, I am to say, that the President in Council, while agreeing with the Lieutenant-Governor that the procedure of the Customs authorities at Calcutta has not been illegal, regrets that the discretion entrusted to them by the law has not been more judiciously exercised. His Honour has no doubt that if the principles now explained are judiciously and uniformly applied at Calcutta all reasonable complaints of the administration of the law will cease.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

R. B. CHAPMAN,

Secretary to the Government of India.

In continuation of the tabular statement which appeared in last Report, the following figures are given to illustrate the effects of the remission of duties on various classes of grey cotton goods, and the percentage of dutiable and free.

IMPORTS OF DUTIABLE AND FREE GOODS, 1880.

GREY SHIRTINGS.

	Dutiable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	2,13,668	32.8	4,43,081	67.2	6,56,749
February " ...	1,76,251	25.8	5,05,722	74.2	6,81,973
March " ...	1,71,200	19.9	6,91,188	80.1	8,62,387
April " ...	1,12,985	14.6	6,60,038	85.4	7,73,023
May " ...	67,639	11.1	5,41,366	88.9	6,09,005
June " ...	90,428	13.0	6,05,227	87.0	6,95,655
July " ...	79,703	10.0	7,14,121	90.0	7,93,823
August " ...	1,11,702	11.3	8,74,433	88.7	9,86,135
September " ...	91,062	11.4	7,68,362	88.6	7,99,424
October " ...	78,213	9.9	7,07,412	90.1	7,85,625
November " ...	1,03,816	12.0	7,21,610	87.4	8,25,426
December " ...	92,931	9.0	9,55,000	91.0	10,47,931

GREY DHOOTIES.

	Dutiable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
January 1880 ...	8,69,274	73.6	3,11,920	26.4	11,81,194
February " ...	8,26,335	70.6	3,43,314	29.4	11,69,649
March " ...	10,68,325	65.2	6,35,598	35.8	17,03,923
April " ...	10,69,433	69.0	6,54,205	35.0	17,23,638
May " ...	10,33,367	61.6	6,43,947	35.4	16,77,314
June " ...	14,62,140	68.8	6,62,977	31.2	21,25,117
July " ...	9,46,105	56.9	7,15,210	43.1	16,61,315

GREY DHOTIES.—(Continued.)

	Datable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
August 1880 ...	12,007,787	47 5	13,24,461	52 5	25,25,238
September " ...	9,50,043	49 2	9,80,161	50 8	19,30,204
October " ...	9,07,153	50 3	6,22,420	40 7	15,29,573
November " ...	7,86,695	63 5	4,51,795	36 5	12,37,890
December " ...	10,42,307	60 7	6,73,474	39 3	17,15,781

GREY T. CLOTHS, PRINTERS & SHEETINGS.

	Datable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	10,624	16 9	51,922	53 1	62,546
February " ...	6,100	13 8	37,951	86 2	44,051
March " ...	.....	00 0	26,034	100 0	26,034
April " ...	661	2 2	29,930	97 8	30,591
May " ...	1,499	6 9	20,010	93 1	21,509
June " ...	7	00 0	19,399	100 0	19,606
July " ...	7,160	17 5	34,799	52 5	41,955
August " ...	15,018	14 4	85,707	55 6	1,03,725
September " ...	18,950	14 0	1,15,914	86 0	1,34,864
October " ...	23,005	15 6	1,22,064	84 1	1,45,069
November " ...	8,790	5 4	1,33,373	94 6	1,42,163
December " ...	19,273	9 3	1,80,185	90 7	2,08,761

GREY CHUDDERS AND SCARVES.

	Datable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
January 1880 ...	606	1 3	48,412	98 7	49,018
February " ...	3	00 0	47,629	100 0	47,632
March " ...	1,930	9 6	18,220	90 4	20,150
April " ...	221	2 8	8,918	97 2	9,139
May " ...	632	10 4	5,550	59 6	6,182
June " ...	"	00 0	53,197	100 0	53,197
July " ...	10	00 0	98,693	100 0	98,703
August " ...	2	00 0	122,638	100 0	122,660
September, ...	4	00 0	128,808	100 0	128,812

GREY CHUDDERS & SCARVES.—(Continued.)

	Datable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
October 1880 ...	4,201	2 7	151,331	97 3	156,132
November " ...	4,807	4 0	110,705	96 0	121,573
December " ...	619	5	121,914	99 5	122,593

GREY MADÁPOLLAMS.

	Datable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	124,432	83 2	23,109	10 8	149,541
February " ...	75,247	78 7	20,346	21 3	95,593
March " ...	105,519	67 3	51,227	32 7	156,746
April " ...	84,954	73 8	30,167	26 2	115,121
May " ...	35,121	48 1	38,914	51 9	75,035
June " ...	60,737	70 2	25,799	29 8	86,536
July " ...	31,223	44 4	38,750	55 6	69,978
August " ...	48,133	37 8	79,106	62 2	127,239
September, ...	42,213	30 1	98,296	69 9	140,509
October " ...	87,659	56 2	68,254	43 8	155,913
November, ...	70,005	36 3	129,451	63 2	199,456
December " ...	92,544	42 0	128,354	53 0	221,178

OTHER GOODS.

(Except Grey Mulls and Grey Jaconets.)

	Datable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	2,323	10 3	20,209	89 7	22,532
February " ...	4,336	16 1	24,471	84 9	28,807
March " ...	313	1 5	26,379	98 5	26,692
April " ...	1,089	9 9	9,905	90 1	11,055
May " ...	3,207	26 7	5,552	63 3	8,759
June " ...	377	4 4	8,104	95 6	8,481
July " ...	151	1 1	12,959	99 9	13,110
August " ...	4,442	18 3	19,822	81 7	24,264
September, ...	5,101	17 4	24,115	82 6	29,216
October " ...	8,461	16 3	43,374	83 7	51,835
November " ...	1,697	4 9	21,437	95 1	23,534
December " ...	7	0 0	45,159	100 0	45,166

REGISTRATION FEES.

This matter was referred to in the report for the half-year ended 30th April last, but the letter addressed to the Government on the subject is only included in the present issue. It was a scheme proposed to be introduced as a substitute for the import and export duties, being a charge levied with the primary object of covering the cost of statistics of trade and navigation, but slightly enhanced for revenue purposes. The general feeling of members was opposed to it, and hence the action taken by the Committee.

*From Chamber to the Government of India.
Calcutta, 18th May 1880.*

Regarding the registration-fee scheme in lieu of customs duties, as propounded by the Hon'ble Mr. Hope in his speech in the last Budget debate, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been at pains to gather the opinions of members, with the view of addressing the Government before legislative action is taken.

The Committee have now before them written expressions of opinion by nearly every firm engaged in the import and export trades, and they find that an overwhelming majority are decidedly adverse to the proposed scheme, even though the incidence of it were limited permanently to one per cent.

It has nowhere been shown that the substitution of registration-fees for the present import duties would in any way lessen the troubles and worries of the Custom House; and seeing that the principle has been so distinctly laid down, by the Government of India and by the late Government at home, that these import duties are to be entirely abolished on the very earliest convenient opportunity, and that recent legislation on the subject is of itself hastening that end, by making it probable that at no distant date the import duties will die a natural death, the Committee think it will be better to await such a desirable result rather than embark on a new scheme distinctly retrograde in principle, of which the advantages are problematical and the disadvantages manifest. As to exports the opinions are almost unanimous against any levy of a fee, however small.

The Hon'ble Mr. Hope, in giving a resumé of what he conceived would be the arguments against the scheme, observes that we cannot regulate practical questions by the theories of doctrinaires, and he ventures the opinion that 1 per-cent. is inappreciable in all trades not of a purely speculative and unsound character; but the Committee conceive that the objections raised are not the theories of doctrinaires, but the mature opinions of those interested in the trade. When Indian products enter into competition with those of other countries the margin for profit is generally so small, that one or even a half per-cent. would often be sufficient to put an end to a transaction which generally would be completed in one or two days, and could therefore hardly be called, speculative. Indeed, the converse holds true; and where a purely speculative transaction was entered into 1 per-cent. would hardly weigh in the scale.

The Committee admit that there are a articles of purely Indian growth which could well bear a registration-fee of even more than one per cent, but on the bulk of the exports the levy of any duty would be a retrogressive measure, attended with injurious influence on the trade in all such articles.

Under these circumstances the Committee of the Chamber are constrained to enter their opposition to the proposed registration scheme.

THE SALT DUTIES.

The Board of Revenue asked the Chamber's opinion as to the causes which led to a large falling off in the demand for sea-borne salt during the past season, and they suggested certain probable reasons as accounting for the diminished trade. The Committee's reply, which was written upon the information then available, is subjoined; but since then another fact bearing upon the disorganisation of the salt trade has been brought to the Committee's notice.

It appears that during the last three months of the past year, owing to certain Railway difficulties, the stock of common salt at the stores of the Sambhur Lake became exhausted. The price of this common salt was $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per maund, but rather than disappoint his customers the Superintendent of the mines authorised the issue at $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas of salt which was worth and sold usually at 8

to 10 annas per maund. The natural result of selling half-crowns for sixpences followed; there was "an unprecedented demand during the months of December and January for salt at the minimum rate." So large were the deliveries of this superior salt that the sales from some other mines in the north-west appear to have been affected, and it is possible enough that to this cause may be traced some portion at least of the falling off in our own trade.

From Board of Revenue to Chamber.

Dated the 3rd July 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of Government order No. $\frac{27}{2}$ s, dated 9th March 1880, regarding the results of the equalization of the Salt duties, and to request that you will be good enough to favor the Board with the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the points noticed by Government.

From Government of Bengal to the Board of Revenue, No. 953-26S. Calcutta, the 9th March 1880.

I am directed to request that the Board will cause an enquiry to be made into some points connected with the practical results of the recent orders for the equalization of the salt duties. It has been represented to the Government that one effect of these orders has been that sea-borne salt has to a large extent been displaced in the

North-Western Provinces and Behar by indigenous salt from the Sambhur Lake and other Indian sources of supply; and it is desired to ascertain how far this statement is correct, and to what extent a further reduction of the customs duty would enable sea-borne salt to penetrate further inland than it does at present.

2. As the Board are aware, the duty on sea-borne salt up to the end of 1877 was Rs. 3-4 a maund, while the duty in the North-Western Provinces was Rs. 3, the former kind of salt being thus handicapped to the extent of 4 annas a maund. On the 1st January 1878, the rates were reduced to Rs. 3-2 and Rs. 2-12 respectively, and on the 1st August in the same year they were further reduced to Rs. 2-14 and Rs. 2-8. Consequently the difference between the two rates, which was formerly 4 annas is now 6 annas a maund.

3. This alteration of the rates of duty, combined probably with other causes, speedily led to a great increase in the supply of Indian salt to the districts of Behar and the North-Western Provinces, and to a corresponding falling off in the transport of sea-borne salt for up-country consumption. Detailed figures, which it appears unnecessary to reproduce here, are given in last year's report of the internal trade of Bengal, and in Mr. Halsey's report of the administration of the Inland Customs Department. These results are further confirmed by statements which have been compiled in this office, comparing the imports of sea-borne salt into the North-Western Provinces and Oudh during a period of 15 months before and after August 1878, when the last revision of duty was made.

4. On this part of the question the facts before Government appear to warrant the conclusion that during

the last two years sea-borne salt has been very largely superseded in Behar, the North-Western Provinces, and Oudh by indigenous salt, and that this is due to the following causes:—

- (a) The change in the rates of duty, which has been more favourable to indigenous than to sea-borne salt.
- (b) The organization of a supply of cheap salt from Rajpootana and the Punjab. The salt from the Sambhur Lake was sold on the spot in 1878-79 at an average price of 6 annas 8 pies per maund, and the consignments of this salt to the North-Western Provinces and Oudh rose from 6,29,000 maunds in 1877-78 to 13,43,000 maunds in 1878-79. There was a corresponding increase in the supplies of Sul-tanpore salt.
- (c) The cessation of the Madras famine. It is stated that during the famine large numbers of country boats came down from Behar and the North-Western Provinces to Calcutta with cargoes of grain, and that the manjhees, rather than return with empty boats, were glad to take back salt at nominal freights. With the termination of the famine this cheap carriage of salt up-country came to an end.
- (d) The rise in the price of salt in bond in Calcutta. It appears that the price in 1877-78 was as low as Rs. 40 per 100 maunds; that in 1878-79 it rose to Rs. 80; and that the present rate is Rs. 70 to Rs. 72.

5. The object, however, of the present enquiry is to ascertain how much of the supersession is due to cause (a), and how much to causes (b), (c), (d), or to any other causes which may be suggested; and the information before Government affords no means of judging upon this point. In order to ascertain the facts, it would apparently be necessary to consult merchants engaged in the trade. I am accordingly to request that the Board will institute such enquiries as they may consider necessary, and will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with a full expression of their conclusions upon the subject.

6. The next question is what effect the equalization of the duties, or a nearer approximation to equal duties, would have in enabling sea-borne salt to penetrate further inland. From the East Indian Railway tables of rates of freight it appears that, as between places more than 450 miles from Calcutta, 1 anna would take a maund of salt a distance of 100 miles. But it is not to be supposed that a reduction of 6 annas in the duty at Calcutta would enable sea-borne salt to penetrate 600 miles further up the country. Some part at least of the reduction would be absorbed by middlemen and carriers. There is at present some point where the prime cost of sea-borne salt, plus the Calcutta duty, plus the cost of carriage, exactly counterbalances the corresponding charges on indigenous salt. But any transport of sea-borne salt beyond this point would have the double effect of increasing the cost of carriage in the one case and of diminishing it in the other. If the cost of carriage formed a large proportion of the selling price of indigenous salt at the present point of equilibrium, any reduction of distance would materially influence the price. I am directed to request that the

Board will carefully consider the question in all its aspects, and will report what result, in their opinion, a reduction of the duty on sea-borne salt to the extent of 4 annas or 6 annas per maund would have in carrying sea-borne salt to a greater distance up the country.

7. It is perhaps hardly necessary to add that it is not intended by this reference to invite any expression of opinion on the policy of the Government of India in regard to the principle of equalizing the salt duties.

From Chamber to Board of Revenue.

Calcutta, 7th August, 1880.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 791 of the 3rd ultimo, enclosing copy of a letter numbered 983, and dated 9th March, being a communication from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

You call the attention of the Committee to a considerable displacement of consumption of sea-borne salt in the Provinces of the North-West and of Behar by the produce of the Sambhur Lake and of other Indian salines; and, after suggesting several possible explanations of this phenomenon, you invite the Committee to state what, in their opinion, is the true cause to which this diminished consumption of sea-borne salt is attributable; and how far a reduction of the duty on sea-borne salt to the extent of 4 annas or 6 annas per maund would tend to increase its sale at distant stations.

In considering this reference, the Committee of the Chamber assume that they may neglect inquire salts such

as those from Bombay, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean; and that they may confine their attention to the produce of the salines of Cheshire and Worcestershire, the very high quality of which enables them to make their way into consumption, though costing more than the rough indigenous article.

Prefacing so much, the Committee would remark—

1. They do not consider that "cause *d*" (the rise in price of salt in bond at Calcutta) has much importance.

On the figures put forward in the Government letter the case stands thus :—

price 1877 in bond Rs. 40;	duty Rs. 325;	cost to consumer Rs. 365
" 1880	" 71	" 297½
" 1881	" 71	" 297½
" 1882	" 71	" 297½
" 1883	" 71	" 297½
" 1884	" 71	" 297½
" 1885	" 71	" 297½
" 1886	" 71	" 297½
" 1887	" 71	" 297½
" 1888	" 71	" 297½
" 1889	" 71	" 297½
" 1890	" 71	" 297½
" 1891	" 71	" 297½
" 1892	" 71	" 297½
" 1893	" 71	" 297½
" 1894	" 71	" 297½
" 1895	" 71	" 297½
" 1896	" 71	" 297½
" 1897	" 71	" 297½
" 1898	" 71	" 297½
" 1899	" 71	" 297½
" 1900	" 71	" 297½
" 1901	" 71	" 297½
" 1902	" 71	" 297½
" 1903	" 71	" 297½
" 1904	" 71	" 297½
" 1905	" 71	" 297½
" 1906	" 71	" 297½
" 1907	" 71	" 297½
" 1908	" 71	" 297½
" 1909	" 71	" 297½
" 1910	" 71	" 297½
" 1911	" 71	" 297½
" 1912	" 71	" 297½
" 1913	" 71	" 297½
" 1914	" 71	" 297½
" 1915	" 71	" 297½
" 1916	" 71	" 297½
" 1917	" 71	" 297½
" 1918	" 71	" 297½
" 1919	" 71	" 297½
" 1920	" 71	" 297½
" 1921	" 71	" 297½
" 1922	" 71	" 297½
" 1923	" 71	" 297½
" 1924	" 71	" 297½
" 1925	" 71	" 297½
" 1926	" 71	" 297½
" 1927	" 71	" 297½
" 1928	" 71	" 297½
" 1929	" 71	" 297½
" 1930	" 71	" 297½
" 1931	" 71	" 297½
" 1932	" 71	" 297½
" 1933	" 71	" 297½
" 1934	" 71	" 297½
" 1935	" 71	" 297½
" 1936	" 71	" 297½
" 1937	" 71	" 297½
" 1938	" 71	" 297½
" 1939	" 71	" 297½
" 1940	" 71	" 297½
" 1941	" 71	" 297½
" 1942	" 71	" 297½
" 1943	" 71	" 297½
" 1944	" 71	" 297½
" 1945	" 71	" 297½
" 1946	" 71	" 297½
" 1947	" 71	" 297½
" 1948	" 71	" 297½
" 1949	" 71	" 297½
" 1950	" 71	" 297½
" 1951	" 71	" 297½
" 1952	" 71	" 297½
" 1953	" 71	" 297½
" 1954	" 71	" 297½
" 1955	" 71	" 297½
" 1956	" 71	" 297½
" 1957	" 71	" 297½
" 1958	" 71	" 297½
" 1959	" 71	" 297½
" 1960	" 71	" 297½
" 1961	" 71	" 297½
" 1962	" 71	" 297½
" 1963	" 71	" 297½
" 1964	" 71	" 297½
" 1965	" 71	" 297½
" 1966	" 71	" 297½
" 1967	" 71	" 297½
" 1968	" 71	" 297½
" 1969	" 71	" 297½
" 1970	" 71	" 297½
" 1971	" 71	" 297½
" 1972	" 71	" 297½
" 1973	" 71	" 297½
" 1974	" 71	" 297½
" 1975	" 71	" 297½
" 1976	" 71	" 297½
" 1977	" 71	" 297½
" 1978	" 71	" 297½
" 1979	" 71	" 297½
" 1980	" 71	" 297½
" 1981	" 71	" 297½
" 1982	" 71	" 297½
" 1983	" 71	" 297½
" 1984	" 71	" 297½
" 1985	" 71	" 297½
" 1986	" 71	" 297½
" 1987	" 71	" 297½
" 1988	" 71	" 297½
" 1989	" 71	" 297½
" 1990	" 71	" 297½
" 1991	" 71	" 297½
" 1992	" 71	" 297½
" 1993	" 71	" 297½
" 1994	" 71	" 297½
" 1995	" 71	" 297½
" 1996	" 71	" 297½
" 1997	" 71	" 297½
" 1998	" 71	" 297½
" 1999	" 71	" 297½
" 2000	" 71	" 297½

2. Nor do they attach any weight to "cause *c*." Return freights by country boats may have been cheap during the Madras famine period; but any increase of supply passing into the districts by this channel would seem to have been at the expense of the railways: at all events, the Committee cannot discover, in the figures before them, any extraordinary increase in the total offtake of fine salt during the period in question. On the contrary, the deliveries then were very considerably less than they are now.

3. Under heading "*b*," it is stated that the salt at the Sambhur Lake is procurable at 6 annas 8 pie per maund, and it is suggested that this is cheap. It scarcely appears so to the Committee, but it is certainly a lower price than that at which it is possible to import English salt; and there is no question in the minds of the Committee.

but that causes "*a*" and "*b*" together account for the preference given in the North-West to indigenous salt. It costs less than sea-borne salt at the starting point, and it enjoys a preferential duty to the extent of 6 annas per maund.

The cost of Liverpool salt delivered ex-ship in the Hooghly will of course vary with the fluctuations of the salt trade at home, the course of freights, and the ruling of exchange. The wholesale price here has been over Rs. 100, and it has been under Rs. 40; but the Committee consider that the very lowest price which it would be at all safe to set down as, on an average of years, the cost to the merchant here would be Rs. 65 per 100 maunds.

Accepting this as a basis, the following comparison is possible :—

Liverpool Salt.		Sambhur Salt.	
Per 100 maunds 65-00 ex-ship.		At the Lake	... 41 65
3-00 landing.		Rail to Agra	... 42 18
68-00 ... Cost at Terminals			... 83 84
287-00 ... Duty			... 260 00
355-00			333 84
35		Freight to Barrh	54
391		(299 miles) Barrh (730 miles)	288

Thus, at equal cost, Sambhur salt may be brought 730 miles against 299 miles in the case of Liverpool salt, the point of meeting on equal terms being about Barrh, the junction for Durbunga and the Tirhoot district.

The reason of this is found wholly in the differential duty.

For instance, remove the duty, or, what comes to the same thing, equalise it, and the comparison will stand thus:—

Liverpool Salt.	Sambhu Salt.
Per 100 maunds 65-00 ex-ship.	At the Lake ... 41-06
8-00 landing.	Rail to Agra ... 42-18
68-00	83-84
52 ... Freight to Mizapore	35
120 ... (500 miles) Mizapore (520 miles)	122

sea-borne salt would then be brought into the midst of the Benares district beyond the first junction with the Oudh and Rohilkund line, and close to Allahabad. Nor can it be doubted but that, having got so far, the pure English article would push its competitor further back, at least as far as Cawnpore, and take possession of Central India.

It is of course somewhat difficult to forecast the increase in consumption of fine salt which would follow on a removal of the disability under which it now labours; but, seeing that during the two years since an additional protection of 2 annas has been given to native salt, the indigenous article has succeeded in displacing the imported article in the North-West to the extent of over 5,000 tons per annum, it appears probable that, were the full 6 annas excess duty on English removed, and the two salts allowed to find their level without favour, the pure descriptions would gain customers for some 15,000 tons yearly more than it now can claim.

It is obvious that the "handicap" on sea-borne salt may be removed in any one of three ways, that is to say—

the duties may be equalised by establishing a uniform rate of Rs. 2-11-0,

or

the duty on indigenous salt may be raised to Rs. 2-14-0,

or

the duty on Liverpool salt may be reduced to Rs. 2-8-0.

The last is clearly the alternative most consonant with the principles of political economy, and is largely recommended by the success which has hitherto attended the experiments made by the Government of India in the direction of a reduction of the salt duties.

The Finance Minister in his statement of February 1880 showed that, under diminished imposts, the total consumption of salt in India had risen from 20,373,000 maunds in 1877-78 to 22,776,000 maunds in 1879-80, being an increase of about 12 per cent, and that the salt revenue had bettered by over one million sterling.

If we take the figures for Liverpool salt alone, we find that under the old Rs. 3-4 duty, the yearly consumption averaged some 6,320,532 maunds, on which the duty would amount to Rs. 20,541,729, whereas the deliveries during the 12 months ending 31st July 1880, under a Rs. 2-14 duty, have been 7,286,354 maunds, paying to Government a revenue of Rs. 20,941,268.

And this remarkable increase has taken place in spite of the fact now prominently before us, namely, the artificial beating back of our trade from the great consuming districts of the North-West and of Behar.

If therefore, in spite of such disadvantages, a reduction in duty from Rs. 3-4 to Rs. 2-14 has enabled sea-borne salt to increase sales by fully 12 per cent, it seems reasonable to assume that a further reduction of duty to Rs. 2-8 would add another 12 per cent to the present consumption of lower Bengal, raising this to 81,60,716 mds. per annum.

But this reduction of duty would also

give us free access to the Upper Provinces, and we have before estimated that this should mean an increased sale of Liverpool salt of

15,000 tons yearly ... 4,69,050

so that a reduced duty might increase

deliveries of fine salt to ... 85,69,766 mds. per annum.

yielding a duty of Rs. 2,14,24,415.

It is of course obvious that a portion of this gain to the Government of Bengal might be at the expense of the revenues of the North-West Provinces. On the other hand, however, it might be that the stream of Northern salt, arrested in its downward flow by the upward current from Liverpool, would be turned into other channels, and suffer little diminution in quantity.

Looking, indeed, to the multifarious purposes which salt serves in countries where it is untaxed, its uses in the arts, its importance in manufactures not less than in very humble industries, its value in agriculture, and its necessity as an ingredient in the food of man and beast, the Committee can scarcely question the soundness of the policy of equalising duties by reduction of the higher.

They are, however, painfully conscious that the time is not opportune for experiments in the remission of taxation, and they hold that it would be nothing short of a

calamity were Government to find itself compelled to introduce an income tax, or even were it to continue for one day longer than might otherwise be necessary at the present unpopular license tax, because of a miscalculation in the probable yield of a reduced salt tax,—a duty which causes neither friction nor active discontent, however prejudicial to the general interests of the country it may very possibly hereafter be shown to have been.

On the whole, the Committee of the Chamber would recommend the tentative adoption of the alternative first mentioned, namely, a simultaneous increase of the duty on indigenous salt, and a reduction of the duty on sea-borne salt, establishing one uniform rate of Rs. 2-11 per maund.

There will thus be no danger of loss to the revenue, and little of salt being made dearer for the people; whilst all qualities will be placed on a fair basis and penetrate the country, not capriciously under artificial provisions, but subject to the ordinary laws of trade, and each upon its own merits.

THE PETROLEUM BILL.

It was represented to the Committee that severe restrictions were being put on the new trade in Kerosine oils in this port, and it was deemed advisable to address the authorities on the subject, as well as on the several sections of the proposed bill in its practical working, with a view to remove the said restrictions prior to the passing of a new enactment. The result of this

correspondence has been the removal of the restriction on the cargoes referred to; and it is trusted that the new law will contain such provisions as will meet the approval of all interested.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 2nd July 1880.

The report of the Committee appointed for the purpose of considering the question of regulating the transport and storage of Petroleum oil was forwarded to the Government of India with your letter No. 901 of the 15th November last, and the Lieutenant-Governor strongly urged that a Bill for regulating its importation, custody, and transport should be introduced, at an early date, into the Council of His Excellency the Governor-General, His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor concurring generally in the outlines of the legislation submitted in the report.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been anxiously waiting for the publication of the Bill recommended by Sir Stuart Payley, but no action appears to have been yet taken by the Supreme Government, and as delay in this respect is materially affecting the interests of those who are engaged in this branch of the trade of Calcutta, the Committee trust the Lieutenant-Governor will excuse their importunity in pressing upon His Honor the expediency of a renewed reference to the Government of India.

The present law, Act III. of 1865, it is claimed, places in the hands of the Police a power and authority which the Committee believe could not have been in-

tended when the Act was passed; and consignees of Kerosine oil in vessels lately arrived are complaining of the undue restrictions that have been needlessly interfering with their business by keeping a large amount of valuable property out of the market.

In support of this representation the Committee submit the following instance, which has been brought to their notice by members of the Chamber, who write as follows:—

“We, and another firm here, recently imported two cargoes of Bothwick's Day-light Kerosine oil by the ships “Mysore” and “Eblana,” total 100,000 cases=1,000,000 gallons. This oil is certified in New York as 100° flash, or 120° burning or fire test: on arrival here, the oil was sampled by the Police on a Sunday morning, without the knowledge of the importers, and tested by the Chemical Examiner to Government, as 98° to 93° flash. This examination virtually prohibited the oil being landed in the town, and the Police, acting under their regulations, could only permit its being stored in the suburbs.

“On a careful examination the Chemical Analyst to Government admitted that his test was liable to vary and was ‘very unreliable.’ Other chemists were called, viz., Dr. D. Waldie and Professor A. Pedler, Chemical Analyst to the Municipality, both gentlemen eminent in their profession. Whole cases were taken from the ships by two Inspectors of Police, and it was proved beyond doubt, after much trouble, that the oil was over 100° flash, and 128° burning or fire test. This fact the Chemical Analyst to Government certified to. The oils

examined by Abel's close test were found to be 103° and 102° Fahr.

"In the *interim*, two large ships have been unnecessarily delayed in their discharge nearly a fortnight; doubt was thrown on the marketable quality of the oil; great hardship has been suffered and heavy loss occasioned; all of which was avoidable. In fact, grave injustice is being done under the present law which fixes the Parliamentary flashing test at 100° Fahr., and a new trade is being impeded and hampered. As before remarked, an efficacious remedy should be at once applied."

The Committee submit that the foregoing remarks will satisfy the Lieutenant-Governor that it is essentially necessary to modify the arrangements under which certificates are at present granted.

The report of the Petroleum Oil Committee recommends that the test to be employed in determining the flashing point of Petroleum should be that known as *Abel's close test*, which has been authoritatively pronounced as the only perfect method that can be adopted: and until that system is introduced and supersedes the present confessedly imperfect and unsatisfactory process, the Committee of the Chamber are of opinion that measures should be taken to free the oil trade, as far as possible, from the restrictions to which it is now exposed.

The Committee append hereto copy of a letter addressed by the Chemical Examiner to Government to the Deputy Commissioner of Police, which shows the absolute necessity for placing the existing system of testing on a different footing. Dr. Warden admits the unreliable nature of the *open test* for determining the flashing

point of Kerosine oils, and as results differing from his own have been obtained by other equally competent persons he frankly accepts their joint conclusions in preference to those arrived at by himself.

The Committee therefore submit that, until the law imposes the standard test to which all Petroleum oil shall be subjected, the chemical analysis shall be conducted jointly by Dr. Warden, Dr. Waldie, and Professor Pedler; that their report shall be accepted as finally determining the quality of the oils submitted for examination; and that the Deputy Commissioner of Police shall be guided by the certificates granted by them.

If the Committee's suggestion recommends itself to the judgment of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, they trust early orders will be issued.

To the Deputy Commissioner of Police,—No. 49 C. Calcutta, Medical College, the 22nd June 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. ²⁵⁷ 254-30, and beg to state in reply as follows:—

1. After the submission of my reports 42a and 44a on the Kerosine oils ex *Mysoore* and *Eblana*, Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co, and Messrs. Edmunds Brothers and Co, informed me that they had submitted samples of their oils to Dr. Waldie and to Mr. Pedler, and that they had obtained results differing from mine.

2. Knowing that the "open test" was unreliable in its indications, I addressed the following demi-official to Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co:—

D.O. No. 47C.

Regarding the Kerosine oil imported by you ex *Mysore* and *Eblana*, I have the following suggestion to make :—

Knowing as I do the unreliable nature of the "open test" for determining the flashing point of Kerosine oils, and bearing in mind that results differing from mine, on the flashing point, have been obtained by Messrs. Waldie and Pedler, gentlemen as competent as I am, to examine oil, I am willing to meet them at the Medical College any day between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M., when we can respectively test the oil, following carefully the directions laid down in the Petroleum Act. Should their results still differ from mine, I will, provided the Deputy Commissioner of Police offers no objection, alter my original certificate.

I would recommend your showing this letter to Mr. Lambert, and obtaining his written sanction before communicating with Messrs. Waldie and Pedler.

(Sd.) C. J. H. WARDEN,

Chemical Examiner to Government.

TO MESSRS. KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.

3. On Saturday, the 19th current, Mr. J. Murray, of Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co., and Mr. Lindstedt, of Ralli Brothers, together with Dr. Waldie and Mr. Pedler, met me at the Medical College Laboratory. The following table shows the results we respectively obtained :—

	<i>Mysore.</i>	<i>Eblana.</i>	<i>Viscount.</i>
Waldie	105*	109*	
Pedler	101*	117*	105*-107*
Warden	100°-93°	96°	98°

4. We examined the oils under apparently precisely similar conditions, yet our results were discordant ; and this was the more noticeable in the case of the *Viscount* and *Mysore* oils, which you state in your letter to be one and the same oil as they were drawn from the same tanks. Baboo Kany Lall Dey also examined a sample of the *Mysore* oil, and obtained 91° Fahr, as the flashing point.

5. In the invoice certificates the *Mysore* and *Eblana* oils were, I believe, certified to flash at 100° Fahr, and *Viscount* at 103° Fahr.

6. Before granting the certificates, I asked Mr. Murray if he had obtained your sanction ; he replied that you had offered no objection to the course which I had suggested in my letter to his firm.

7. The Petroleum Committee in their report to Government remarked that the "open test" was unreliable, and they recommended in its stead Abel's close test. Their report was accepted, and legislation passed on the subject.

8. With a test which was avowedly unreliable, I adopted the only procedure which appeared to me fair to the mercantile firms concerned : I asked for a consultation with the two chemists who had examined the oils, and who had obtained different results.

9. At Mr. Edmonds' request, a sample of the *Eblana* oil was examined by Abel's test, when it flashed at 103°, 102°, and 103° Fahr. A certificate was given to that effect, which elicited your letter No. 47C, asking me to examine samples.*

* The *Mysore* oil was also examined by the close test with the following results :—103° and 102° Fahr on the flashing point.

10. In conclusion, I accepted Messrs. Waldie's and Pedler's results in preference to my own figures, and I would accept their joint results under similar circumstances, in the case of an avowedly defective method of analysis again without the least hesitation.

I have, &c.,
(Sd.) C. J. H. WARDEN,
Chemical Examiner to Government.

No. 2125.

Copy forwarded to Messrs. Edmonds Brothers & Co., for information.

(Sd.) J. LAMBERT,
Deputy Commissioner of Police.

CALCUTTA :
23th June 1880. }

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 670. Calcutta, the 26th July 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant received on the 12th idem, submitting copy of a Report of Dr. Warden, the Chemical Examiner to Government, on the oils imported in the ships "Mysore," "Eblana" and "Viscount," and requesting that the Government of India may be pressed to take legislative action with the view of modifying the arrangements under which certificates to land oil are at present granted. The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce request that, until the law prescribes the standard test to which all Petroleum oil shall be subjected, the chemical analysis may be conducted jointly by Dr. Warden, Dr. Waldie, and Mr. Pedler, their joint report being accepted as final.

2. In reply, I am to invite the attention of the Chamber of Commerce to the proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Government of India, dated the 9th instant, published in the *Gazette of India* of the 17th idem, proposing legislation on the subject, and to say that the present correspondence, showing the necessity of immediate legislation, will be submitted to the Government of India.

3. With regard to the results obtained by Dr. Warden at his examination by Abel's close test, I am to say that he explains that the oils from the ships "Eblana" and "Mysore" were found by him to flash actually at 75° and 76° respectively. The certificate that the flashing points were 102° and 103° was granted by him after adding 27°, the accepted difference between the results obtainable by the close and open tests respectively. It will thus be observed that, though the oils in question have been properly admitted under the existing law of this country, they would be excluded under the proposed law, which would fix 83° by the close, and 110° by the open test, as the lowest limit for second class Petroleum.

4. The confusion in this case has arisen from the employment, in the first instance, of the open test, which is well known to be uncertain. Dr. Warden has now been instructed invariably to proceed according to the close test as prescribed in the English statute 42 and 43, Victoria Cap. 47, with rectification for the difference of 27°; and, as this test is practically liable to no variation, it appears to the Lieutenant-Governor to be unnecessary to lay down any rule for associating other chemists with Dr. Warden in his examination. In order, however, to minimize the risk of error, immediate steps will be taken to

obtain from England a set of the best apparatus procurable.

*From Government of Bengal to Chamber,
No. 777. Calcutta, 19th August 1880.*

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of a letter No. 779, dated the 27th ultimo, from the Government of India in the Legislative Department together with a copy of the bill to regulate the importation, possession, and transport of petroleum and other substances of a like nature, and to request that you will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the provisions of the Bill.

I am to ask that your reply may be submitted not later than 15th September.

*Government of India to Government of Bengal.
Dated Simla, 27th July 1880.*

I am directed to forward herewith twelve copies of the papers noted on the margin,* and to request that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will favor the Government of India with an expression of his opinion, and with the opinions of such officers and other persons as he may think fit to consult, on the provisions of the Bill and on the objections raised in the letter from Messrs. Wallace & Co.

* Bill to regulate the importation, possession, and transport of petroleum and other substances of a like nature.

Statement of objects and reasons of the above-named Bill.

Letter from Messrs. Wallace & Co., Bombay, dated 6th March 1880.

2. I am also to request that the Bill and Statement may be published in the *Calcutta Gazette* in English, and in such other languages as His Honor may deem proper, and that the dates of such publication may be communicated in your reply.

3. The reply to this letter should be sent in by the 1st October next.

*From Chamber to Government of Bengal.
Calcutta, 4th September 1880.*

I am directed to reply to your letter No. 777, dated 19th ultimo, inviting an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the Petroleum Bill, now before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General of India.

When a Special Committee was appointed in June 1879 to enquire into and report on Petroleum and inflammable oils, the Chamber was invited to depute a representative of their body to serve on that Committee, and accordingly Mr. J. N. Stuart acted on their behalf. That gentleman informs the Chamber that he was outvoted on every point by the other members of the Committee, and that his practical representations had not due attention, especially when he pointed out the injurious effect on the trade in kerosine oil which the recommendations of the Committee would be certain to exercise if made the basis of a new enactment. This Chamber did not therefore endorse or approve of the report of the Special Committee. Subsequently the Committee of the Chamber were called on by merchants engaged in the trade to make a representation to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and

to ask that legislative measures be taken to place this growing branch of the import trade of India on a sound foundation, as the provisions of Act III. of 1865, in the mode of their application by the Police, as to tests, &c., were pressing unduly, and were the cause of great hardships and heavy loss to all interests concerned.

The trade in kerosine is so new, and is in the hands of so few merchants, that the Committee have hitherto hesitated to express opinions as to what legislative action was necessary to foster it, while at the same time securing general protection to life and property.

During the last few weeks, however, a good deal of information has been placed before them, and upon the data thus derived, which they believe to be reliable, they now instruct me to address you.

Appended hereto will be found letters from firms who are the representatives of the trade in Calcutta, and it will be observed that their views are supported by the opinions expressed by the Chamber of Commerce in Bombay.

The opinion arrived at by the Committee is that the present law (Act III. of 1865) is sufficiently stringent for all practical purposes, excepting perhaps those portions which relate to the limits of quality or test, and in these respects it might be amended. They would deprecate legislation on the lines laid down in the proposed Bill, the provisions of which are felt to be too severe, and many of them to be so impracticable as to probably necessitate their modification at no distant period.

The importance of careful legislation will be obvious when it is remembered that there are now in this port

and in Bombay, (besides the stocks in Madras, Rangoon, &c.) upwards of 6,000,000 gallons of petroleum landed under the provisions of the present law, a large proportion of which will probably be still in stock on the 1st January next, and will then, if the present Bill become law, be held to be dangerous.

The Committee would ask His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor not to overlook the fact that this oil has hitherto proved itself to be not dangerous.

Touching the provisions of the Bill now before them, I am instructed to remark upon the several sections as follows:—

Owner.—This definition is needless, as the word *owner* does not again appear in the Bill. Besides, as the Committee have already pointed out on a previous occasion, an agent does not possess the authority which would enable him to so represent an owner.

Section I.—No legislation should come into force before ample time has been given for advice at port of shipment, and for arrival and sale of cargoes that may be in or afloat to India: instead of 1st January 1881, the Committee would therefore recommend the 1st May. The Bill should contain the following proviso:—"The provisions of this Act shall not apply to kerosine or other inflammable oils now in or afloat to Indian ports if shipped prior to the date of passing this Act." This proviso is obviously necessary to protect the interests of those merchants who, working in good faith, are now heavily interested in kerosine oil in stock in Indian ports, and must continue to be so interested for several months to come.

Section III.—The Committee, whilst adhering to the subdivision of kerosine oils into three classes, are strongly of opinion that the *flashing* point as fixed by the Bill is much too high, and should be as follows :—

1st class	Prof. Abel's Test 92°F. equal to Open Test	120°F.
2nd "	ditto " 73°F.	ditto 100°F.
3rd "	all oils flashing under 73°F. by Professor Abel's close test.	

I am directed to point out, in explanation of this subdivision, that if kerosine oil is classed as in the Bill, and the limit is fixed at 103°F. by Abel's test for *first class oil*, the importations will be very small, as this "water white" or "heart of the oil" can only be produced in limited quantities, and at such a high cost as will practically prevent its importation.

To fix for *second class oil*, or the oil of commerce, a limit of 83°F. by Abel's test would be to destroy the trade in this article. It is proved that oil of this high test is quite as dangerous as oil at 73°F. of the same test. Indeed, the higher the test the greater is the heat developed in a burning lamp in a given time. Dr. Letheby's opinion, given to the Home Government on this point in 1871, is as follows :—

"Such a petroleum *flashing* at 100°F." is, I am confident, perfectly safe for use in lamps, and would, I am convinced, satisfy the conditions of trade; but if petroleum of a higher standard, as declared in the Bill, is decided on by Parliament, it will seriously affect the petroleum trade, and by shutting out the American petroleum will give a monopoly to the English-paraffin oils. The result of this will be a burden on the poor

* *Viz., Open test.*

"who are the chief consumers of the oil, without the *slightest advantage in the way of safety.*"

This opinion is, the Committee think, entitled to due consideration, as is also Professor Abel's given to the Home Government, *viz.* :—"There were not, in his judgment, any well-established grounds for considering that *"flashing point (100 degrees)"* was not calculated to "afford adequate protection to the public." These are the two highest authorities on the subject.

The Committee think it illogical and unreasonable to fix the limit at 83°F. of Abel's test, and to exclude 82°, or indeed any lower limit down to 73°, which is, from all the evidence obtainable, a "perfectly safe" limit, say—100 flashing point, or 120° of the burning or fire test. This also appears to be the Parliamentary test fixed by the Home Government. This limit, whilst it would admit all the well-known and established brands, would exclude dangerous oils.

Section V.—The limit as to quantity of second class oil, without a license, should, the Committee think, be raised to 100 gallons.

Section VI.—The rules and regulations are too stringent, and go beyond providing adequate protection to life and property.

Sections VII, VIII, IX.—Dangerous petroleum under 73°F. of Abel's test should not be stored in quantity in large towns and cities, the Committee being of opinion that stringent rules in this respect are necessary.

Section X—should be made to apply to dangerous oils only,

Section XIII.—A duly certified duplicate or copy of the test should be given to the importer or dealer, in order that he may have official evidence of the quality of his oil.

Sections XIV, XV, XVI.—In regard to possession, the proviso suggested in remarks on Section I. would be required as a protection to present holders, and these sections should not be enforced till after 1st May 1881, if indeed the date should not be further extended in the case of possessors.

Section XVII.—The extreme penalty of confiscation should be enforced only in cases of proved dishonesty or intended fraud.

The Committee's attention has been directed to the danger of landing oil in native boats, as in the case of the "Chalmette" referred to in the Port Commissioners' latest report. This risk is now from ship to shore only, all oil being landed at the Metiabroz Ghant, or on the opposite shore. To obviate all chance of fire, the Committee propose that a watchman from the Port Trust Department be put on each boat, whose duty it shall be to prevent boatmen smoking or using fire or lights under any circumstances, till all the oil is discharged: the cost of such watchmen being borne by the importers.

The Committee earnestly recommend these suggestions and opinions to the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, in the belief that by their adoption a sound and practicable law on the subject can be framed for all India, and the trade extended without fear of detriment to any interest or to private property.

To H. W. I. Wood, Esq., Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce. Calcutta, 9th August 1880.

We beg to call the attention of the Committee to the Petroleum Bill No. 12 of 1880, now before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council of the Government of India, and which it is feared will shortly become the law on this subject.

We enclose a representation which has been made to us by Messrs. Edmands Brothers on the subject, and which it appears to us is worthy of the Committee's attention.

We also enclose copy of a Resolution passed by a Special Meeting of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce relating to, and condemnatory of, this particular Bill.

There are two points to which we would direct the Committee's attention:—

1st.—That as the oil of commerce consists mostly of a quality ranging from 100° flash to 110° or 73° to 83° of Abel's close test, the bill, if it become law, must seriously restrict, if it does not destroy, this new branch of the import trade.

The finer oil above 83° A.T. is, not, we understand, procurable in quantity.

2nd.—That such an exception as the following should be inserted in the bill to prevent heavy loss to holders and shippers who, working in good faith, have supplies in and afloat to India:—

"The provisions of this Act shall not apply to kerosine or other inflammable oils now in or afloat to Indian ports, if shipped prior to the date of passing this Act."

There are, we understand, upwards of 390,000 cases of kerosine oil in this port, mostly of the second and third classes, and there is no doubt a large stock in Bombay also. If the Petroleum Bill is passed in its present state, it will cause ruinously heavy losses to holders and to all interested. It is incredible that so stringent and sweeping a law should be placed before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council without being submitted to the Chambers of Commerce of Bengal and Bombay for their opinion and remarks, and without a clause of the nature we have indicated being included in it to protect traders already heavily interested in this trade.

We are,

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.

MESSRS. KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.,
Calcutta, 5th August 1880.

We wish to call your attention to the provisions of the new Petroleum Bill, a copy of which appears in the last *Gazette of India*, 24th July, in hopes that you will induce the Chamber of Commerce to consider it, and make a strong representation to the Government of the absurdity of several of the sections, and of the great injustice and pecuniary loss which will result to the owners of kerosine oil on and after 1st January 1881.

We think you will join with us in objecting to the following sections :—

Section (1).—New legislation should only apply to new imports, as the present stock of oil, and that on the way, was imported and shipped in good faith, at an increased cost to meet the requirements of the present law, and there is likely to be over 20 lakhs of gallons in Calcutta alone on 1st January 1881, of dangerous petroleum, for which no license can be granted (*See (7) (c)*).

(3.) The fixture of the standard of second class oil 10° above that legalized in England will greatly increase the cost and curtail consumption amongst the natives, while 83° oil is as dangerous as 73°, as either only becomes dangerous in case of a general conflagration.

Section (5).—The restriction of holding only 40 gallons of second class oil will work greatly to the detriment of the retail trade, if every shopkeeper is exposed to the annoyance of taking out a license, and it is impossible to carry on business if their stock is only allowed to be 4 cases.

(7.) *b. & c.*—Every one knows perfectly well the purpose for which 99 per cent. of all kerosine is used in this country, i.e., for burning, so that the absurdity of clause (c) is at once seen, and the power granted to the Local Government thereunder.

(8.)—Forbids any one from buying even one tin or 5 gallons, and doubtless every large boarding-house in Calcutta contains now, at least, 100 gallons.

(10) (c).—This will necessitate the labels on the tins being stamped in America, and as the tests differ so much, or the mode of testing in the two countries, that it will be very difficult to induce the packers to do this, as no other country in the world demands it.

(13).—A duplicate copy of the test should also be provided to the importer or dealer, that he may have the same evidence.

(17.) If this bill is passed as it stands, 2 lakhs cases kerosine may be confiscated on 1st January next, which must be destroyed where it is stored, as the Government can neither keep, *possess*, nor transport dangerous petroleum, nor even destroy it under (7) (c), as other petroleum, other than dangerous, can also be destroyed.

Without touching on the "aquaro," we must express our astonishment at such a Bill as this emanating from such a high official.

Yours faithfully,
EDMANDS BROTHERS & Co.

THE PETROLEUM BILL.

At the Special General Meeting of the Chamber to be held on the 3rd of August 1880, the following Resolution will be proposed by G. A. KIRTRIDGE, Esq., and seconded by H. A. RICHARDSON, Esq.:—

"That hitherto Municipal rules have proved sufficient to guard against any dangers, real or supposed, in the case of kerosine oil.

"That in the opinion of this Chamber nothing has been brought forward to call into operation even the provisions of Section 37 of Act XII. of 1875, and that, until that provision has been proved to be ineffectual, no further legislation is needed.

"That the Bill introduced into the Legislative Council of India, called the Petroleum Bill, must, if made law, seriously restrict, if it does not entirely check, this important and rapidly growing trade.

"That the Government of India be respectfully requested to postpone further consideration of the proposed Bill until good cause be shown for the necessity of restrictive measures.

"That the Committee of the Chamber be requested to represent these views to His Lordship the Governor-General in Council."

J. GORDON,
Secretary.

[*Carried unanimously.*]

MESSRS. KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.,
Calcutta, 21st August 1880.

We should esteem it a favor if your Mr. O'Keefe as a member of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce would urge upon the other members the necessity of protesting, in common with the Bombay Chamber, against the Petroleum Bill as introduced into the Governor-General's Council.

It would have been as well if the Chamber's representative on the Petroleum Committee, having been outvoted on every point, had refrained from signing the report, but the mistake may be rectified now by prompt reference to the Government of the trade's objections to the Bill,

Section 1st—which stipulates that the Act shall come on 1st January 1881, is so manifestly unjust to those who have kerosine in stock or afloat, that we think it is only necessary to bring it to the notice of Government to have an extension of time allowed.

Section 3rd.—It has yet to be satisfactorily proved that kerosine flashing at 73° by Abel's test (100° by Parliamentary test and 118° by American test) is not sufficiently high for the safety of the public. Until last year scarcely a single case of oil flashing above 100° (Parliamentary test) had been imported into Calcutta from America; the bulk of the imports flashed at 94° Parliamentary test, (110° to 112° American test). Merchants had no intention of importing oil that was considered dangerous, but the reason of such oil being imported lay in the ignorance that prevailed, both among the importers and the police, as to what was considered dangerous oil under Act No. III. of 1865 of the Bengal Council. Merchants in good faith, as we ourselves did on the arrival of a cargo, presented the American certificate, showing a flashing (or rather burning) point of 112°. This was on each occasion accepted by the police, and no further interference took place. As soon, however, as it was discovered (in March and April 1879) that the American test was not the same as the Calcutta test, (though the Act specifies no particular style of testing) an improvement in the quality of oil imported took place; from that date no ships have left America for Calcutta with oil flashing below 100° Parliamentary test. We are strongly of opinion, therefore, that the terms of the present Bengal Act would, if applied to all Indian ports, be sufficient to prevent the importation of oil under 100° Parliamentary

test. The only alteration to be made being the substitution of Abel's test at 73° for Parliamentary test at 100°. The Act at the present moment, except on this last point, seems to be working most satisfactorily.

That the standard now fixed upon is too high for ordinary lighting purposes, while at the same time 100° (Parliamentary test) is sufficiently high for safety, was the opinion held by the late Dr. Letheby, who was considered one of the first authorities on mineral oils in England, and whose opinion was taken by the English Government, when the Petroleum Bill was before Parliament, for he wrote in 1871—"Such a petroleum" (flashing at 100°) "is, I am confident, perfectly safe for use in lamps, and would satisfy the conditions of trade; but if petroleum of a higher standard, as declared in the Bill, is decided on by Parliament, it will seriously affect the petroleum trade, and by shutting out the American petroleum will give a monopoly to the English paraffin oils. The result of this will be a burden on the poor, who are chief consumers of the oil without the slightest advantage in the way of safety."

We believe that not a single instance can be cited of any serious accident having happened with oil flashing above 73°.

The establishment of such a high test as 83° will cripple, if it does not destroy, a rapidly increasing trade and lay a hardship on both merchants and consumers.

The fear which is entertained by so many persons who are unacquainted with the article arises from a belief that kerosine can take fire spontaneously, that opinion being actually given by the Advocate-General last year,

when a legal point connected with the Act was referred to him. For what we know, the introducers of the Bill may be subject to the same delusion.

Section 5—is absurdly stringent, and sufficient to ruin any trade. Oil that is considered safe enough to be imported should be perfectly free in transport and storage.

Section 10—practically gives a premium to dishonest dealers. We think there would be no harm in marking cases which contain oil flashing below 73°; but to make a difference between two classes of oil, which are both allowed to be imported, say flashing at 83° and 84° is, in our opinion, beyond the province of the Government.

Yours faithfully,

BALMER, LAWRIE & CO.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 16th August 1880.

I am desired to forward for the information of your Chamber 6 printed copies of the letter addressed by this Chamber to the Government of India on the 14th instant, regarding the Petroleum Bill, together with the proceedings of the General Meeting of the Chamber on the 3rd instant which are attached thereto.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Bombay, 14th August 1880.

I am directed to inform you that at a Special General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held on 3rd

instant, the following Resolution, of which due notice had been given to members, regarding the Petroleum Bill, which is now before the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, was carried unanimously, namely:—

"That hitherto Municipal rules have proved sufficient to guard against any dangers, real or supposed, in the case of kerosine oil.

"That in the opinion of this Chamber nothing has been brought forward to call into operation even the provisions of Section 37 of Act XII. of 1875, and that, until that provision has been proved to be ineffectual, no further legislation is needed.

"That the Bill introduced into the Legislative Council of India, called the Petroleum Bill, must, if made law, seriously restrict, if it does not entirely check, this important and rapidly growing trade.

"That the Government of India be respectfully requested to postpone further consideration of the proposed Bill until good cause be shown for the necessity of restrictive measures.

"That the Committee of the Chamber be requested to represent these views to his Lordship the Governor-General in Council."

In forwarding this Resolution for the consideration of the Government of India, the Committee of the Chamber desire me respectfully to invite the attention of Government to the proceedings of the Chamber which are attached hereto, and with great deference to urge that, if Government are unwilling to withdraw the Bill, the further consideration of it may at least be postponed

until the Council returns to Calcutta, when it may be possible to send a deputation from Bombay to confer with the Select Committee on the subject.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. GORDON,

Secretary.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th September 1880.

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 10th of last month, forwarding copy of a letter, dated the 14th ultimo, addressed by your Chamber to the Government of India relative to the Petroleum Bill, and attaching thereto the proceedings of your Chamber, held on the 3rd August, in connection with that proposed legislation.

I am directed by my Committee to thank you for your communication, and to furnish you with a copy of their own letter to the Government of India on the same subject.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 15th September 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of this Chamber to thank you for your letter of the 9th instant, enclosing a copy of the letter dated the 4th instant, addressed by

your Chamber to the Government of Bengal on the subject of the Petroleum Bill.

The Committee at the same time desire me to add that a Special Committee has been appointed by this Chamber to consider the provisions of the Bill, and that the Report of your Chamber thereon will be submitted to the special committee.

From Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th September 1880.

You have probably received from the Bombay Chamber copy of their letter to the Government of India relative to the Petroleum Bill, and of the proceedings of their Special General Meeting, held on the 3rd of last month, in connection with the proposed legislation: and I am instructed to furnish you with a copy of this Chamber's letter to the Government of India on the same subject.

FACTORY LABOR BILL.

A circular having been forwarded by the Government of Bengal to the agents and secretaries of all the Companies engaged in the manufacturing industry of the province, it was deemed advisable to hold a meeting of the representatives of all the mills, in order to discuss the Factory bill in all its bearings and to draw up an united protest against its provisions. The

meeting was held, and the result was that this Chamber's letters of the 22nd February 1879 and 18th March 1880 to the Government were endorsed in every particular. The united protest sent into Government of Bengal is appended.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 14th July 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt, on the 29th ultimo, of your letter No. 13 of the 23rd idem, relative to the amended Factory Labor Bill No. 2.

The Committee having already expressed their opinions of the proposed measure to the Government of India in the Legislative Department, in a letter dated the 18th March last, and as they are unable to add any remarks to that representation, I am directed to forward a copy of that communication for submission to the Lieutenant-Governor, and which the Committee request His Honor will be pleased to accept by way of reply to your reference under acknowledgment.

To the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 29th July 1880.

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 13 of the 23rd ultimo, forwarding copy of a Bill No. II to regulate labor in Factories, with copy of the report of the Select Committee thereon, and requesting an expression of opinion on the said Bill.

We, the Agents, Managers and Secretaries of several Companies, having Mills and Factories in Bengal, and now engaged in the Jute and Cotton industries in this province, have given the said Bill our most careful consideration.

With this reply to your circular, we beg to hand copies of the letters sent to the Government of Bengal by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated 22nd February 1879, and to the Government of India, dated 18th March last, the former objecting to Bill No. 1, and the latter condemning the compulsory character of the Bill No. II. We cordially approve the aforesaid letters in every particular, and hereby respectfully protest against any legislation on this subject, as alike uncalled for and unnecessary. We are unanimously of opinion that if legislative action is taken, in accordance with the Bill under examination, the jute and cotton manufacturing industries, now struggling for existence, owing to various causes, will be much trammelled and harassed, and many of them may be ruined. We record the following objections :—

Secs. 3 & 4.—Inspection of factories.—We are convinced that the interference of Inspectors and their assistants and subordinates will demoralize labor and lead to many vexatious difficulties. Inspectors are given too much power by the Bill.

Secs. 5 & 6.—We append hereto opinions of medical practitioners, showing how unreliable the test of age is. We are certain that however skilful the certifying surgeon in any district may be he will not be able to give a reliable certificate of age. Sec. 5 must, we are agreed, cause a serious hindrance to mill work. New boys come

into work weekly, and if they have no certificate, or cannot obtain one from any cause, many of them will lose employment. Sec. 6 will prove impracticable in its operation in the absence of a "birth record." Few, if any, native children have such a record. It has been held by medical men that there are no physical indications by which the age of a native child can be determined. The age may vary as much as two years under certain conditions.

Sec. 16, 1st & 2nd clauses must of necessity prove impracticable. No manager of a factory could swear to, or prove, the age of a child without great and vexatious trouble, loss of time, and perhaps, stoppage of his factory for one or more days. No two surgeons are likely to agree as to the ages of native children. The effect of the 2nd clause may prove to be that one mill is allowed to go on whilst another is put to the most harassing trials in regard to ages of children, who are, perhaps, expert spinners and weavers, and earning good wages. We see no reason to unsettle this arrangement.

Lastly.—The Select Committee who reported on the Bill (No. II) do not in any single instance appear to be gentlemen who employ factory labor, or who have had any practical experience on the subject. Hence it appears to have arisen the very partial approval of the Bill (No. II) in its present form. The report of the Select Committee leaves the above objections unsettled.

In recording our protest against the Bill to regulate labor in factories, we would respectfully suggest to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, if indeed any Bill is necessary (which we emphatically deny), to appoint a Select Committee of gentlemen engaged in the jute

and cotton industries in Bengal in co-operation with such officials as Government may approve, and from their report and recommendations to frame an act which will be alike fair in all its terms and conditions to the employer and employed. This the Bill (No. II) utterly fails to do in our opinion.

We have the honor to be,

SIR,

Your obedient servants,

APCAR & Co., *Scalpoore Jute Manufacturing Coy., Ltd.*
 BARRY & Co., *Gowalpoore Company, Ltd.*
 ERNSTHAUSEN & OESTERLEY, *Howrah Mills Coy., Ltd.*
 FINLAY, MUIR & Co., *Champany Jute Coy., Ltd.*
 MACNEILL & Co., *Ganges Jute Mills Coy., Ltd.*
 KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co., *Fort Gloster Jute Mills Co., Ltd.*
 PP. HOARE, MILLER & Co., F. E. PATTESON, *Servigunge Jute Coy., Ltd.*
 MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & Co., *India Jute Coy., Ltd.*
 SCHOENE, KILBURN & Co., *Samuggur Jute Factory Co., Ltd.*
 GEO. HENDERSON & Co., *Barnagore Jute Factory Co., Ltd.*
 BIRCHMYRE BROTHERS, *Hastings Jute Works.*
 RUSHTON BROTHERS, *Asiatic Jute Coy., Ltd.*
 A. R. MCINTOSH, *Liquidator, Calcutta Jute Mills Co., Ltd.*
 ANDREW YULE & Co., *Budge Budge Jute Mills Coy., Ltd.*
 KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co., *Bowree Cotton Mills Co., Ltd.*
 S. H. ROBINSON, *Goosery Cotton Mill Coy., Ltd.*
 SCHOENE, KILBURN & Co., *Dunbar Cotton Mills Co., Ltd.*
 MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & Co., *Garden Reach Cotton Mill Association.*
 ANDREW YULE & Co., *Bengal Mills Coy., Ltd.*

TRADE-MARKS BILL.

The Committee have been asked by the Government of Bengal to express their opinion on the Indian Trade-Marks Bill (No. II), and it will be gathered from the annexed correspondence that the views they held last year as to the absence of any necessity for legislation, and as to the objectionable character of several material provisions of the proposed Bill, have not been modified by further consideration.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber,—

No. 1643. Dated Calcutta, 29th March 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of a Bill (No. II) to provide for the registration of trade-marks, together with a copy of the Report of the Select Committee thereon, and to request that you will be so good as to favor the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill.

2. I am to ask that your reply may reach this office by the 15th June next.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 30th June 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 19th instant, asking for an early expression of opinion in regard to the Bill (No. II) to provide for the registra-

tion of trade-marks, forwarded by you on 29th March, accompanied by a copy of the report thereon by a Select Committee of the Legislative Council.

The Committee have again, for some time past, had under consideration the subject of this Bill, and they have invited the general body of members of the Chamber to express their opinions in regard to it. The result is that the Committee see no reason to change the views they expressed in their letter to the Government of Bengal, dated 22nd August 1879, viz., that if the bill can be made to apply exclusively to Indian manufactures it will meet with their approval, but in its present form, and intended as it is to apply also to imported goods of European manufacture, it must have their strenuous opposition.

It would appear that the Bombay Chamber of Commerce do not now take this view of the question, as they advocate the extension of the Bill so as to include all trade-marks of goods wherever manufactured; this, however, appears to be a distinct departure from the original and unobjectionable intention, viz., that there should be legislation only and entirely for the protection of the cotton spinning and manufacturing industries of Bombay.

From those engaged in trade in the Bengal Presidency no remonstrances on account of the want of such an Act have ever come, and, no difficulties having arisen from its absence, no desire has been expressed for legislation. The Committee therefore respectfully submit that it will be unusual and unfair to make the provisions of such Act extend to Bengal. Their opinion is that it will be time enough to make the extension when the want becomes

felt, and when those whose interests the Government have in view express a desire for protection.

The Government is naturally anxious to carry out the wishes of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and of the Mill Owners' Association; and, such being the case, the Committee would submit that the proposed bill might be made to apply to that Presidency only; this would meet the wishes of those who have asked for legislation and who consider legislation necessary or desirable.

In regard to the proposal made in their letter of 22nd August 1879, to restrict the Act entirely to trade-marks used in connection with Indian products, the Committee admit that there may be difficulties (such as have been pointed out by the Special Committee), but these difficulties, or possible hardships to the Manchester manufacturer from his not being able to register his marks in India, could be provided for by an admission that registration in England is to be equivalent to registration here, in which case detection would soon follow any attempt (as has been suggested in the example given) to appropriate marks already registered in England; and, moreover, the Committee think it improbable that any home manufacturer could be injured by his marks being used on any cloths made in this country.

The Special Committee have also pointed out that, in event of registration in England giving the right to register here, a manufacturer who desired to appropriate a mark in use in this country but not registered, might get it registered in England, than have it registered here, and thereby get a presumptive, and thereafter, under certain circumstances, an absolute title to it as against the

true owners; but the Committee submit that the case is one which would rarely, if ever, occur in practice, and need hardly, therefore, affect the question.

Again, I am desired to point out—what appears to have been overlooked—that a work such as is proposed could never be performed by a Registrar having no technical knowledge of the subject; that he must, as in England, be assisted by a committee of experts, and that at home this has been found to entail an amount of labor which was never contemplated, and that even if such necessary experience and technical knowledge exist in this country, it would be practically impossible to find men possessing them who could afford the time necessary for such work.

The Committee do not see why, registration of trade-marks in England being accepted by law as equivalent to registration here, it could not be arranged to give the manufacturer of Indian products power to register his marks in England and under the English Act, which would do away with all necessity for special legislation in this country.

The Committee do not know whether it might not be possible, as another alternative, to have a Registration Office in India for the exclusive registering of trade-marks for Indian products, that office being provided with photographed or other duplicates of all marks registered at home, so as to admit of such marks only being registered here as do not happen to be registered at home.

In conclusion, and referring to the foregoing, the Committee desire me to say:—

(1)—That they object to the proposed Bill, on the grounds that registration is not required in this Presi-

dency, and that even a permissive Act would cause great and unnecessary inconvenience.

(2)—The Act might be made local, applicable only to the Bombay Presidency.

(3)—In event of the Government determining to legislate for the whole of India, it would be desirable either to make registration in England equivalent to registration here, or to provide that all registrations be made at home.

REGISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS.

With regard to this important subject, the Committee are endeavouring to draft a Bill which, whilst entailing no hardships on the native community, will give those trading with native firms the security they ought to possess.

The Committee feel that the subject is surrounded with great difficulties, and that the utmost care will have to be taken in drafting the Bill, but they trust these are not insurmountable.

Recent cases in court have shown how very desirable such registration is. Every one who has had to bring an action against a Native firm is aware of the extreme difficulty of ascertaining who are really partners, and of the facility with which in the present state of the law men can conceal their connection with any firm.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 19th June 1880.

With reference to this Chamber's letter of the 23rd March 1867, your answer of the 31st July 1867, my reply of the 16th September 1867, and your acknowledgment of the 4th October 1867, I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce again to address you on the subject of the registration of Native Partnerships.

In the last of the letters above referred to, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council was pleased to state that the subject would be considered in the Legislative Department, but the Committee regret that since that date no such legislation as that proposed has taken place.

The subject is such a pressing one, and of such vital importance to the commercial community, that the Committee of the Chamber are compelled once more to bring it before the Government, although at the same time they feel it to be unnecessary to go into the question at any length, this having been done in the correspondence above referred to, and in the more recent letter addressed by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce on the same subject. The question is, moreover, thoroughly understood by Government, as was shown in their letter of 31st July 1867; and the Committee are confident that they have only to urge on His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the importance of passing some enactment for compelling such registration of partnerships as will enable the commercial community to have confidence (not at present possible) in dealings with

Native firms, to ensure at once that the matter will again be taken into consideration in the Legislative Department.

Cases are constantly occurring, where, according to the best information obtainable, a man is supposed to be a partner in a Native firm, but when that firm becomes insolvent he escapes from responsibility by denying a partnership which cannot be proved; and, in like manner, a Native when sued and his goods attached puts forward some one else as being in partnership with him, which person thereupon can claim the goods so attached as the property of the partnership.

The following cases and a published judgment of the Small Cause Court fully illustrate the difficulties merchants have to contend against, and how helpless they are in the absence of any legal protection of the character for which the Committee now apply.

Ram Churn Dass and Surbhosok Dass Rs. 3,111-12-0
Dhumsok Dass, Sookdeb Dass „ 1,250-6-6

These dealers failed about the beginning of September 1877, and when the plaintiffs came to institute action against them, it was found that the same partners were trading under different names. A decree was obtained against the defendants in the Small Cause Court on separate causes of action for the whole of the above amount, with the exception of a promissory note of Rs. 1,728-12-0, which was beyond the jurisdiction of the Court.

The plaintiffs thereupon took out warrants against the men and tried to arrest them but could not succeed in

doing so, as they remained in concealment for some time, only coming out on Sundays and holidays, when they could not be arrested, and, finally, they fled to Rajpootana, after remaining some time at Chanderanagore. One or more of the men are at present in concealment in Calcutta or its neighbourhood, but it is believed outside the limits of Calcutta, and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the Small Cause Court, and are endeavouring to make arrangements to re-commence business as soon as the Statute of Limitation enables them to do so. The men are well known to possess money and property of considerable value, but the same being situated in the Native State of Rajpootana, it is practically beyond reach of a warrant of any Court.

Nashmul Choonilall.—Failed 24th October 1877. The liabilities of the firm were about 1½ lakh of rupees, and on the evening before their failure, they took delivery from several firms. They fled to Rajpootana, and, up to date, their creditors have not realized anything from them.

Sewbux Bungehe Dhur.—Failed about the end of April of the current year. Liabilities about 1 lac. Up to the evening before they suspended they took delivery of considerable quantities of goods, and on the following morning, when the failure became known, there was not a single piece of goods or an article of furniture remaining in their shop or godown. The parties have, it is said, fled to Rajpootana.

(Before J. V. Woodman, Esq.)
 NOGENDRONATH DUTT AND ANOTHER
 vs.

ULLMANN, HIRSCHORN AND COMPANY.

This was an interpleader claim for Rs. 125.

Mr. Woodman.—In this case the plaintiffs interplead for certain goods which have been seized by the defendants in execution of a decree obtained by them against one Netto Gopal Dutt. From the evidence, it appears there was a joint ancestral family business carried on by one Haradhone Dutt and Netto Gopal Dutt in partnership, under the name of Haradhone Dutt, and that on the death of Haradhone, his two sons, the present plaintiffs, inherited his share in the business, which was still carried on in the name of Haradhone. The evidence also shows that, with regard to one of them at any rate, *viz.*, Nogendra, he, as well as Netto Gopal, took an active part in carrying on the business. The goods seized, consisting of candles, are goods which the firm was in the habit of purchasing, and in which they dealt; they are seized in the shop where the business is carried on, and I have no doubt whatever, they were goods purchased in the course of the joint business and out of the funds of that business.

For the defendants it is contended that they are not partners, because of the absence of any express agreement to combine. I don't think an express agreement necessary. As I have said, two of them at least took an active part in the management; they all lived on the profits of the business, and they would have had to live on less if there had been losses; the rent of the shop was paid in the name of Haradhone Dutt, and the license was taken out in that name. So that certainly some agreement to

carry on business together in that name may be implied, and something more than a mere combination of property or co-ownership may be said to exist. Then it is said that these persons, the plaintiffs, are in the position of representatives of a deceased partner who had left money in the firm, or children of a deceased partner receiving a portion of the profits by way of annuity, and are therefore, in the former case, under Section 241 of the Contract Act, and in the latter under Section 243, not partners; but the facts of this case go further than the circumstances to which those sections apply; for here, so far from merely leaving money in the firm, or merely being in receipt of a share of the profits, they are actually assisting in carrying it on. Being partners, what has happened is this: that, in execution of a decree against one partner, partnership property has been seized, and as this Court has power only to sell the actual goods and chattels belonging to the judgment-debtor, and not any right, title, or interest in them which he may have, I have no alternative but to release the goods. My sympathies are entirely with the defendants, but until some law is passed making compulsory the registration of the names of those who are partners in native business firms, there will always be cases in which execution creditors will be sufferers from being unable to join as defendants all the partners of a firm, and in all such cases this Court can give them no relief if they seize the partnership property. In no possible view of this case could I hold that these goods are the sole and exclusive property of their judgment-debtor, and, therefore, it follows, I could not order them to be sold. I think the property seized ought to be released.

The Committee understand that the main difficulty which the Government has hitherto experienced in framing any measure to meet the case has been that of defining what a partnership really is, and, consequently, to prevent the hardship which would ensue were persons entering into partnerships for special ventures obliged to register such co-partnership. But this is a difficulty which, in the opinion of the Committee, can be overcome: for the line, they submit, could without much difficulty be drawn between temporary partnerships and those of a recognised and more or less durable nature existing amongst native firms having publicly known places of business.

The Committee trust that His Excellency the Governor-General in Council will be pleased to give this very important subject the consideration which, they respectfully submit, it demands.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—

No. 3588, Dated Calcutta, the 29th July 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No.—, dated the 19th June last, to the address of the Government of India in the Legislative Department, on the subject of providing by legislation for the compulsory registration of Native Partnerships.

2. In reply, I am to state for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, that the Government of India are anxious to give their best consideration to any practical suggestions that may be made for effecting the proposed registration, and at the same time avoiding interference with the Indian custom whereby members of native firms often belong to undivided families.

3. I am at the same time to forward the accompanying copy of a letter No. 2099, dated the 3rd November 1879, to the address of the Government of Bombay, which conveys the views of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council in the matter.

From Government of India to Government of Bombay, No. 2099, dated Simla, the 3rd November 1879.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 5376, dated the 6th September last, forwarding copy of a letter, with its accompaniments, from the Chairman and Secretary of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce on the subject of a proposed legislative enactment to provide for the compulsory registration of partnerships.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Governor-General in Council has little doubt, but that the difficulty described by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce is a real one; and the question for consideration is, whether it is practicable to remove or remedy it by legislation in the direction indicated. The objections which have appeared to the Government of India to exist to such legislation have been fully set forth in the previous correspondence ending with the letter from this office No. 2583, dated 13th October 1874. Since then a large body of representative native merchants have signified their concurrence in the recommendation of the Chamber, and the Bombay Government have given their support to the measure proposed in the enclosures of your present letter. If, as appears to be the case, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and their legal advisers consider it practicable to frame an enactment which, while avoiding the

objections which have been taken by the Government of India, would nevertheless tend to effect the desired object, the most convenient course would perhaps be to invite the Chamber of Commerce to prepare and submit, through the Government of Bombay, for the consideration of the Governor-General in Council, a draft of such a measure as they would wish to see enacted. If the Bombay Government see no objection to this course His Excellency in Council authorises its adoption.

3. In framing this draft it will be necessary clearly to distinguish between transitory and standing partnerships and to avoid the difficulties arising from the existence, in the case of native mercantile and banking firms, of members belonging to undivided families. His Excellency in Council is further of opinion that the scope of the Bill should, in the first instance, be limited to the Presidency towns, and that in this view it should provide that no firm having its sole or principal place of business in a Presidency town, and not being registered, should be allowed to sue third parties, and no member of such a firm should be allowed to sue his co-partners on the original side of the High Court, or in the local Court of Small Causes.

4. I am to add, that the Governor-General in Council cannot give any pledge that a draft bill, if submitted, will be accepted by the Government of India, but His Excellency in Council will be prepared to give his careful consideration thereto, and will endeavour, so far as may be practicable, to give effect to the wishes of the mercantile community of Bombay, as expressed through the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, in the matter, so far as they may be supported by the Bombay Government.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 6th September 1880.

The Committee of this Chamber recently addressed the Government of India on the subject of the compulsory registration of partnerships, and since then they have observed with much interest the proceedings of your Chamber in regard to the same subject.

By your kindness the Committee have received a copy of your Solicitors draft bill and of the correspondence relating to it, but it is with much regret that they find you had given up all idea of legislation, there being apparently so many practical difficulties in the way of it.

The compulsory registration of partnerships is, as can be judged by the frequency with which the subject has been revived in both Chambers, of considerable importance to the mercantile community; and perhaps the want of such an Act is felt here even more than in your city: and it therefore appears to the Committee that, before ceasing to urge the attention of Government to the subject, it would be desirable to discuss the difficulties, and see whether they cannot be overcome.

The Committee had intended to ask the Chamber's Solicitors to prepare a draft bill, but learning that Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen had done this on your behalf, it seemed best to request you to let us consider theirs.

They accordingly placed it before their Solicitors, Messrs. Sanderson & Co., who have given it their fullest attention, and made some suggestions which your Committee will perhaps kindly consider, in consultation with

the framers of the draft bill, in order to see whether something cannot be made of them.

Messrs. Sanderson & Co. agree with Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen in thinking that there are no legal difficulties in the way of legislation, and they also concur in the opinion that there is no real foundation for the objection as regards compulsory registration of the names of partners, members of a joint Hindoo family, causing a substantial modification of the law regarding undivided Hindoo families;—at least Government should be asked to point out in what respect the law would be modified or altered.

As regards the clauses of the draft bill as it stands, it would be desirable to make the "local extent" apply to the Presidency towns and a radius of 10 miles round them; many large native dealers in this Presidency having their places of business some distance out of the township.

Our Solicitors suggest that under Part VI the penalty for non-registration of partnership should be made severe, irrespective of the disqualification in regard to instituting proceedings in Courts of law; but it is not improbable that Government might object to this, and that was probably what your advisers had in view when omitting it.

The chief practical difficulty which your Solicitors contemplate in the working of such an act seems to be the necessity of registration extending to every trading partnership in the Presidency towns, from that of the most eminent firms down to that of the smallest Native dealers. It has occurred to Messrs. Sanderson & Co., in

regard to this, that advantage might be taken of the various License Acts in defining the classes to be registered, there being no necessity to register the partnership of petty Native-dealers in the bazars, such small transactions as this class have being for cash. Supposing the trading firms coming under classes 1, 2, 3 were registered, all licensed below class 3 being exempted, one of the practical difficulties would be overcome.

Although the License Acts may be repealed at some future date, a system of registration would have been established in the meantime, and the Licensing Officer might be utilized for the purpose of defining the persons to be registered, in the same way as he does now define under what classes they are to be licensed.

Perhaps your Committee will kindly consider these observations; and awaiting the favour of a reply.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 15th September 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of this Chamber to acknowledge, with their thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant on the subject of an Act for the compulsory registration of partnerships.

In reply, they desire me to say that the points raised by your Solicitors had not been overlooked by them when the subject was being considered. If, however, your Solicitors are able to so modify or alter the draft bill as to satisfactorily overcome the practical working difficulties which we encountered, the Committee will be prepared to give it careful consideration.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 22nd September 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, relative to registration of partnerships.

In their letter to your address, dated the 10th February last, Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen say there are many "practical working difficulties" in the way of the proposed legislation, but it was not their purpose to enumerate them; and you also refer to the practical difficulties encountered while considering the question.

The Committee of this Chamber are not at all inclined to under-estimate the circumstances which have led to the temporary abandonment of the scheme advocated by your Chamber, nor are they at the moment prepared to place before you any suggestions beyond those submitted in my letter of the 6th instant.

They will be glad, however, to give their most careful attention to the practical difficulties to which your Committee and Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen refer if you will be so good as to set them forth.

From the Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 2nd October 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo, relative to an Act for the compulsory registration of Partnerships.

In reply, I am desired to state that the practical difficulties to which our Solicitors referred surrounded the

entire working of the Act as proposed. Both in respect of its application and incidence and of its limited character the feeling at the last General Meeting of this Chamber, when the question was discussed, unmistakably condemned such legislation. In so far as the difficulties were local, it is not probable that your Chamber can assist us in overcoming them, and in so far as they are general or may be peculiar to Calcutta or any other locality, your Chamber are in a position as good as if not a better one than ourselves to set them forth.

Another reason which induced this Chamber to abandon the scheme for the present was that as there was a registration of partnerships Bill under consideration at home, it was better to defer further action here until the result of the English proposed measure was known.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th October 1880.

I have my Committee's instructions to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant in the matter of compulsory registration of partnerships.

The Committee attach so much importance to the employment of every expedient to accomplish the object which they have in view that they purpose to refer the subject again to their Solicitors after the vacation, and if it is decided to frame a Bill for the consideration of Government it will be obviously necessary to repeat much of what is contained in that drafted by your Solicitors; and I am directed to ask if you have any objection to our adopting the latter to such extent as may be found expedient.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 23rd October 1880.

I have submitted your letter of the 9th instant on the subject of an Act for the compulsory registration of partnerships to the Committee of this Chamber, who desire me to say, in reply, that they have no objection to your adopting the draft bill prepared by their Solicitors to such extent as may be found expedient. It must, however, be understood that the sense of the Chamber as shown at the General Meeting on the 3rd August last, when the question was discussed, was distinctly adverse to our continuing to follow up the matter either directly or indirectly.

EXECUTION IN NATIVE STATES OF DECREES BY BRITISH COURTS.

The Committee in taking up this question are fully aware of the difficulties which may be suggested in legislating for the relief of those who hold decrees by British Courts, but are unable to execute them against debtors who abscond to native states, or against property possessed by them within native territories. The seriousness of the evil is, however, one which is continually being brought to the notice of merchants by the ease with which dishonest traders and bankrupts evade the decrees obtained against them by absconding to native states, and a premium is thus offered to fraud which calls for legislation.

The following letter shows the views expressed by the Chamber in bringing the subject before the Government, and they await such action as may afford the relief asked for.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 26th June 1880.

With reference to the enforcement of decrees of civil tribunals obtained by British subjects in British India against debtors who abscond to native states, His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General was pleased to pass a Resolution, dated 27th August 1868, to the effect that holders of such decrees must present them themselves, or by their lawfully constituted agents, for execution before tribunals in native states, without in any way invoking the aid or relying on the influence of the British representative,—the question of reciprocity in the execution of decrees being one left to be decided by the tribunals of the respective Governments; and that where there are no regular tribunals, the political representative would, as a general rule, abstain from putting any pressure on, or using his influence with, the Chief or the Durrar in order to the execution of a decree obtained in British territory.

His Excellency considered that this determination ought not to inflict any real hardship on claimants who have resorted successfully to our Courts for redress, as in many cases where large sums of money are claimed from debtors resident in British territory, such persons, if they abscond into native states, leave either property or partners

behind them in the said British territory, against whom execution may at once be taken out; and it was further stated that in all cases where plaintiffs apprehend that a defaulting debtor may abscond or may carry away his property, the provisions of Act VIII. of 1859 (now the Civil Procedure Code) regarding the attachment of property while a suit is pending, afford to all litigants, who are properly alive to their rights and position during litigation, a fair and adequate security against eventual loss by evasion or default.

The Governor-General in Council further observed that there might occur flagrant cases in which a defaulting and absconding debtor possesses large means within the limits of native territories in which the default and evasion may be marked by acts of gross fraud and flagrant dishonesty, and in which by deceit or artifice he may have reduced the honest trader to ruin, or have left him without the slightest prospect of redress, and there might be other peculiar circumstances which, in the judgment of the Political Officer, might render interposition on his part expedient.

Upon this important subject I have been directed by the Committee of the Chamber to address the Government again, in consequence of the great difficulties experienced and the heavy losses continually sustained by the merchants of Calcutta by reason of native traders being able to evade the law by absconding to native states in which the warrants of British Courts do not run. It was not considered expedient to address the Government on this subject until it was ascertained whether the resolutions above referred to effected the end desired, but the Committee regret to say that merchants, however careful

they may be as regards giving credit, are constantly large and heavy losers by debtors absconding.

On that part of the Resolution which alludes to debtors from whom large sums are claimed, and who abscond, leaving either property or partners behind them in British territory, against whom execution may at once be taken out, I am to observe that the Committee recognise no difficulty as regards such debtors, the experience of the Chamber being that such cases are extremely rare, as one partner has no occasion to abscond if he leaves property or a solvent firm behind him.

With reference to the statement that in cases where plaintiffs apprehend that a defaulting partner may abscond or may convey away his property, all litigants, who are properly alive to their rights and positions, are afforded fair and adequate security by the Civil Procedure Code, the Committee would remark that it is the very difficulty of discovering that debtors are about to abscond, or are conveying away their property, that renders the provisions of the Code almost inoperative. The applicant has first of all to satisfy the judge, on affidavit and by the evidence of witnesses, that the debtor has absconded, or is about to abscond, or that he has disposed of, or removed from the jurisdiction of the Court, his property, or any part, with intent to avoid or delay the plaintiff, or to avoid any process of the Court, or to obstruct or delay the execution of any decree that may be passed against him. It has from experience been found almost impossible to satisfy a judge on these points; but assuming that this may have been done, the Court will issue a warrant to arrest the defendant, and bring him before the Court to show cause why he should not give security for his appearance. Be-

fore a warrant can be issued the debtor has got outside Calcutta, and the warrant so far is valueless. The same process has to be followed in order to get an attachment of the property, and, when such order is obtained, it is generally found that the debtor's godowns are empty, and no goods can be traced, they having all been despatched by degrees up-country or elsewhere in such a way as to be untraceable, so that the plaintiff finds himself put to considerable expense, in the first instance, in trying to prevent the debtor absconding, or to prevent his goods being removed; he then has to prosecute his suit, as best he can, for the purpose of getting a decree, and here again he experiences great difficulties owing to the defendant having left no one on whom process can be served, or any premises on which it can be posted; but assuming these difficulties are over, and a decree is obtained, and the whereabouts of the defendant discovered to be in an independent state, in which there is a regular tribunal, the plaintiff, in person or by authorised agents, has, after going to the expense of getting a certified copy of the decree from the High Court, to proceed to the state in which the debtor is residing, and apply afresh for an order to arrest defendant, or attach his goods; and this very application is at once known, and before any order can be obtained for arrest or attachment, the debtor has again absconded or sold or removed his property and goods. In places where there is no regular tribunal the application to the British representative almost as easily becomes known to the debtor, and arrest or attachment of property is rendered impossible.

The Committee of the Chamber feel that the only course by which merchants, who are compelled, in the

ordinary course of their business, to trade with native dealers according to the usual custom, can be protected, is for the Government to legislate in such a way as to make warrants issued for the arrest of absconding debtors to run in the native states as well as in Calcutta; and they apprehend that there would be no difficulty in complying with that request. The warrant might on application of the plaintiff, to the Court, and on his satisfying the Court that there is good reason to believe the defendant is going, or has gone, out of the jurisdiction of the High Court, direct the warrant to the Sheriff, authorising him to transmit it to such Court, Judge, or British agent, or representative, as the plaintiff may direct, for execution by such judge or representative, the plaintiff himself, or by his agent, taking the necessary steps to assist in the execution of the warrant; or, in special cases, the Court might have power to make over the warrant to a special officer to be nominated by the Court for execution, which officer could, under instructions from the plaintiff, proceed to the state and arrest the defendant. Difficulties in regard to this may be suggested on account of the want of reciprocity with the native states, but the Committee consider that on the matter being represented to the chiefs of such states they would only be too glad to assist the British Government.

The evil complained of is a most serious one, and the ease and facility with which a debtor can get beyond the reach of his creditors hold out such a premium to dishonest traders and bankrupts that they are taking advantage of it more frequently than formerly. In the month of April last a native dealer was believed to be getting into difficulties; with the view apparently of

making effectual arrangements for his flight, he made certain payments to lull suspicion, and two days afterwards it was found he had gone, and not a package of goods or anything could be found: It would have been impossible in this case to have got evidence to prove that the debtor was about to leave Calcutta for the purpose of avoiding process, or that he was removing his goods, as he had managed to remove them before it was known he was in difficulties.

With these remarks the Committee place the subject before the Governor-General in Council in the confident expectation that it will not fail to receive His Excellency's favorable consideration.

**PROPOSED NEW FORM OF BILL OF LADING
FOR SAILING VESSELS FROM CALCUTTA TO
PORTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.**

An amended form of bill of lading having been submitted for the approval of the Chamber by the Special Committee appointed in London, a general meeting was held last June to consider what further action should be taken in the matter. Several members expressed their views, pointing out forcibly wherein certain clauses introduced were objectionable; and it was finally decided to refer the matter to a Committee in London with full powers to settle with shipowners the exact form of the document. As yet no decision appears to have been arrived at.

*Proceedings of a Special Meeting of the Chamber
of Commerce, held at noon, on Monday, the 21st
June 1880.*

W. E. CRUM, Esq., *President*, in the chair.

The Chairman commenced the proceedings by saying,—

Gentlemen :—The notice which was sent to you of this meeting, along with the various papers with which you have been furnished, leaves me little to say in regard to the object of our attendance, further than to invite discussion as to what our action should be.

We have had submitted to us an amended form of bill of lading drawn up under legal advice by a Special Committee appointed by merchants and shipowners in London, in consequence of the protest which you signed last year against proposed innovations.

This Committee, as you are aware, consisted of the following gentlemen :—

MR. JOHN CONRY, MR. J. BLACKWOOD,
„ S. A. RALLI, „ GEO. DUNCAN,

and we have now, I think, to consider what course we will adopt; whether to discuss the various clauses of this bill of lading, and express our views upon them; or to appoint a committee of merchants in London to meet an equal number of shipowners, and give them either full or restricted powers to deal with the matter for us.

I will be glad if any of the gentlemen present will express their views on the subject.

Mr. T. S. Anderson said:—Gentlemen :—You will remember that some months ago the London shipowners

tried to introduce a new form of bill of lading for sailing vessels. At that time a few firms here met together to see to what extent our mutual interests were threatened, and we got an elaborate opinion from Messrs. Sanderson & Co. on the various new clauses. This was sent home by this Chamber, accompanied by a protest signed by most of the shippers of this city. We have now before us an amended document drawn up under the advice of Messrs. Freshfields, and from which we are told all objectionable clauses have been expunged.

The clause in this new bill of lading to which the shipowners say they attach most importance is that in which they seek to relieve themselves from liability for any act, neglect, or default whatsoever of pilots, master, or crew in the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage. Now, gentlemen, you are probably aware that at a late trial (the "*Zurich*,"—*Bauer & Co. vs. Hutchinson*) it was decided that the clause, "all and every the dangers and accidents of the seas and of navigation of what nature or kind soever" did not free the owner from liability for neglect or default of master or crew. In the House of Lords it was further held, in the case of *Doolan vs. the Midland Railway Company*, that a contract which stipulated for non-liability against damage arising from the negligence of servants would be opposed to reason, and therefore not binding. Now, although this liability is nothing new to shipowners, as Mr. Corry tries to make out (I remember getting counsel's opinion on the point in 1867), and although the risk is as insurable by the shipowner as by the shipper (there used to be, and presumably still are, clubs for the purpose), yet I think we would all willingly

cede this point, provided the House of Lords' decision were altered by some new Act. But if this decision holds any clause such as desired by shipowners is invalid, and I much fear would lead the way to endless litigation. What is there to prevent underwriters refusing to pay up, and referring you back to the shipowner, saying that the contract was illegal, and that no loss had been sustained by you for which you could claim, till you had exhausted your recourse on the ship? At present underwriters pay up and sue the shipowner in the shipper's name, but will they be as ready to do this when they have to start with a contract nullifying the shipper's claim,—illegal though such contract may be?

Regarding the other clauses of the bill of lading, as I said before, we sent home a statement of objections drawn up by Messrs. Sanderson, and the only reply we have to these is that counsel has been consulted and the shipper's rights have been carefully protected. Now, gentlemen, I think we are entitled to something more than this. I think that it would have been only fair for the shipowners to have sent us a copy of the Secretary's opinion; and I therefore beg to move that the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce be requested to write to Mr. Corry for a copy of Messrs. Freshfields' opinion, in order that members of the Chamber may clearly understand what liabilities are affected by the proposed new bill of lading; that the further consideration of the subject be postponed till that opinion be received; and that the old bill of lading be meantime retained as the adopted form of this port.

With your permission I will read a paragraph from Messrs. Sanderson's opinion:—

"The old form of bill of lading exempted the ship
"from liability in respect only of distinctly insurable
"risks, the occurring of which was easy of proof, and
"for such matters as the guaranteeing of the nature of
"the weight and contents of closed packages.

"The new form of bill of lading, however, would
"practically exempt the ship from claims of any sort,
"for although it is not sought by the new exceptions
"and conditions to exempt the ship from liability arising
"from act of negligence of the master, crew, or pilot of
"ships (except where such negligence occurs in the
"management and navigation of the ship), and therefore
"it would be open to a shipper under the new form of
"bill of lading, or his consignee, to claim and recover for
"damages where it could be proved that such damage
"had been caused by negligent stowage of goods or other
"similar neglect; yet it is obvious, from the nature of
"things, that the difficulty of proving negligence in the
"vast majority of cases would be an insurmountable
"obstacle to success in any proceeding under the bill of
"lading framed in accordance with the new form."

At the London meeting Mr. Stephen Ralli is reported
to have said that the basis of Mr. Matthew's opinion
was "that the shipowner will not be relieved of his
obligations, and that the bill of lading with regard to
"any matter will not affect the shipper's right to recover."

In the absence of the actual opinion of Mr. Matthew
I am of course open to correction, but it seems to me
that it must have been that no clause a shipowner can
insert in his bill of lading will hold good against common
law, but it will shift the onus of proof from the ship-

owners' to the shippers' shoulders. Now this seems to
me to be the point at issue, and one to which shippers
must on no account agree. The shipper sees nothing
of his goods nor of the treatment to which they are
subjected from the time they pass into the hands of the
shipowner. It is therefore impossible in 99 cases out
of 100 to prove neglect or default. On the other hand,
the shipowner and his servants are the only people who
touch the goods while under bailment to him, and he
has every opportunity of proving the absence of neglect
and default. The only inference, therefore, is that neg-
lect and default do occur, and that the shipowner is
resorting to the new bill of lading as a means of avoid-
ing his legitimate liability, and I think that to all clauses
which merely transfer the onus of proof without freeing
the shipowner from liability shippers should give their
most strenuous opposition.

A great deal was said at the London meeting about
the greater strictness of the clauses in the steamer bill
of lading, but we all know that these are not enforced.
The steamers coming here belong to regular lines, and
it is for the owners' interests to keep on good terms with
shippers; but sailing vessels come from all parts of the
world, and a considerable proportion of them are not
regular traders, so that the owners have no self-interest
to make them reasonable in allowing claims which are
not duly proved.

Mr. J. W. O'Keefe rose to propose an amended resolu-
tion and said:—It does not appear to me that we should
be taking a correct course by referring the several clauses
of the bill of lading to a Solicitor, and perhaps from him
to Counsel. I do not see that the matter is one which

admits of any delay. We may have the objectionable bill of lading passed without demur. I think it would be a preferable course to appoint a Committee of Calcutta merchants, with full powers, who would meet an equal number of representatives of the shipping interest, and together discuss and settle each point separately.

In regard to the bill of lading proposed to be adopted I would remark that, generally speaking, I have found the old style of bill of lading to work satisfactorily, both for shippers and shippers, and, that being so, innovation seems to me likely to be pernicious. I am opposed to the change. Taking the new clauses of the proposed bill of lading separately, my experience is that it is difficult to get a sizar to mark bales, bags, or cases with letters of uniform size at all times. I hold that loss caused by negligence, the act of a mariner, renders the shipowner liable, and he should not be allowed to be free from such liability. "Reasonable wear and tear" also it would be difficult to define, and the insertion of this clause would, I think, lead to litigation; the clause in regard to 'sweat, rust and decay' is, it seems to me, loose and one-sided: "rust" is already provided against by the clause we so frequently see in bills of lading—"not accountable for leakage, breakage, or rust." Why insert this objectionable clause? It appears to me, gentlemen, that we are wasting time on a point where we have great unanimity, and that our best course, as I said before, is to refer the whole subject to Calcutta merchants of experience, of whom there are many resident in London. Holding these views I propose the following amended resolution:—

1st.—That the proposed bill of lading in all its clauses be referred to a Committee of six merchants in London representing the Calcutta trade, with full powers to act in the matter and to settle the exact form of bill of lading for ships sailing between Calcutta and any port in the United Kingdom.

Mr. G. H. Morrison said:—I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution proposed by Mr. O'Keefe. It is always prejudicial to business to have an unsettled controversy, and Calcutta merchants may safely leave their interests in the hands of their representatives at home, especially since these representatives will have at command the best legal advice in the world.

As regards the bill of lading submitted by the joint committee of merchants and shipowners, there may be clauses needing modification; but, upon the whole, the document does not strike me as particularly objectionable from a merchant's point of view. It appears to me that the bill of lading raises questions rather between the underwriter and the shipowner than between ship and shipper. Speaking generally, it occurs to me that the risks which the shipowner repudiates are accepted and taken off the merchant by the subscribers to an ordinary Lloyd's policy. This view is borne out by the statement made by Mr. S. Ralli and Mr. Park at the London meeting. They said that Messrs. Freshfields and Mr. Matthew, the Queen's counsel, had given it as their opinion that the status of the merchant would in no wise be injured by the new bill of lading. "Wherever the marine policy does not protect him, the shipowner is to take him up." Of course it will be the duty of our representatives to satisfy themselves of this; but

supposing matters are as represented there is little ground left for contention.

No doubt, the clause in the bill of lading on which shipowners lay most stress is that exempting them from the consequences of negligence in navigation on the part of their servants; and Mr. Anderson has urged that the introduction of this clause would encourage litigation, because the shipowner cannot legally contract himself out of liability for acts of his servants, and the insurer would therefore refuse to pay claims and refer the merchant back to the owner. I leave the legal question to the lawyers; but I do not think that underwriters are likely to take up a position which would unsettle confidence in their policies; and certainly I should say that an Insurance Office would find the temptation to litigate stronger under the old bill of lading, which says nothing about the shipowner not being responsible for negligence, than under the proposed bill of lading, which gives notice alike to the merchant and to his insurer that, so far as the shipowner can, he will resist such claims.

On its own merits, the shipowner's clause will not be thought unreasonable if you reflect that, when an owner has provided a good and seaworthy vessel, has properly manned her, and has carefully chosen for her officers with Board of Trade certificates, he has done all that is possible for the protection of the property committed to him: and if, because some officer neglects the lead or dozes on watch, you are to make his owner responsible, not only for the value of the vessel, but also for her entire cargo, then I think that no prudent man will face risks so enormous, and so much beyond control, for the very narrow returns which even the best-managed ships have

latterly yielded. Please observe that it is not the consequences of carelessness in loading or stowing or discharging from which the shipowner desires relief: these risks remain on him as they ever did. The clause runs:—

“Neglect in the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage.” It is not worded identically with the similar clause in the bill of lading first sent out to us.

Then there is the clause about the countermarks, and it is objected that they cannot always be conveniently made of the same size as the leading marks. Well, perhaps not; but at least the spirit of the request is reasonable. We may confess that the shipowners have made a concession in accepting responsibility for countermarks. No one can say that it would have been impossible for merchants to carry on their trade without getting the countermarks signed for. At some trouble and some expense every merchant might mark his jute with his house-marks so unmistakably as to obviate any need for the ship's officer to take cognisance of the countermarks. However, merchants have carried their point, and shipowners will, in future, take the trouble and expense off their shoulders. As a merchant, I cannot pretend to be sorry; and as an agent, I am glad to be relieved of a discussion which has recurred whenever we have had to draft a charter; but let us admit that the shipowners may fairly ask, in return, that the countermarks shall be large enough to be seen without spectacles!

The remaining clauses are of less moment; there are some things which may seem unnecessary or questionable, but our friends at home can work them all out in committee, and I would once more appeal to you to give full

powers to our representatives, and let us put out of our minds this vexed question of the bill of lading.

Mr. O'Keefe's amended resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

The Chairman informed the meeting that a letter had been received from the Madras Chamber, requesting to be represented at the conference with London shipowners, and nominating Mr. William Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., to act in their behalf. The Committee of the Chamber had already placed Mr. Macfarlane's name on the list of proposed representatives, and this would be communicated to the Madras Chamber; but of course this meeting could not take the responsibility of committing the Madras Chamber to the resolution giving the gentlemen proposed full authority in the matter. This would, however, be put before their Madras friends, who would doubtless communicate their instructions to Mr. Macfarlane, who could easily represent the interests of both Chambers.

The Chairman then moved the following Resolution, which was seconded by *Mr. John Morrison*, and carried:—

2nd.—That the following gentlemen be invited by the Chamber to arrange between themselves for six of their number to act on the Committee referred to in the first Resolution, namely:—

R. E. BICKERDINE, Esq.,	OF MESSRS. MORISON, BICKERDINE & CO.
W. BLACKWOOD, Esq.,	" BLACKWOOD, CROOK & CO.
J. N. BULLER, Esq.,	" KEYTEWELL, BULLER & CO.
O. V. BRINTHWAITE, Esq.,	" BRINTHAUSEN & OSTERLEY.
F. W. HEILGERS, Esq.,	" F. W. HEILGERS & CO.
W. MACFARLANE, Esq.,	" H. B. MUIR & CO.
E. A. MAVEGORDATO, Esq.,	" TAYLOR & CO.
P. J. NICOLAS, Esq.,	" KELLY & CO.
STEPHEN RALLI, Esq.,	" RALLI BROTHERS.
H. REINHOLD, Esq.,	" REINHOLD & CO.

The Chairman was of opinion that the members of the Chamber were under great obligations to Mr. Reinhold for the considerate service he had rendered by furnishing them with a special report of the proceedings of the meeting held in London, on the 21st April, prepared from notes taken by shorthand writers; and he moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Reinhold, which the meeting cordially adopted.

A vote of thanks to the Chair closed the proceedings.

London, April 22nd, 1880.

SIR,—Having been appointed by a public meeting of merchants and shipowners engaged in the Calcutta trade as a Committee to superintend the preparation of a bill of lading for sailing ships homewards, we jointly acknowledge the receipt, in September last, through the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, by Mr. Corry, one of our number, of a protest signed by a large number of merchants in Calcutta against the introduction of the proposed new form of bill of lading, and about the same time the receipt of a very comprehensive examination of the different clauses of the document by Messrs. Sanderson & Co., Government solicitors in Calcutta, which we made it our business fully to consider and to submit to the judgment of our best legal authorities here.

Under the advice of Messrs. Freshfields, the well-known solicitors to the Bank of England, instructed by Mr. Matthew, Q.C., the enclosed form of bill of lading has been prepared, and was yesterday submitted to a meeting at the Cannon-street Hotel, which was called as per accompanying circular.

This meeting did not approve of any definite arrangement being come to without communication with their friends in Calcutta; at the same time it was felt that as the shipowners had no representatives in Calcutta (all the shipowners being resident in this country) a full and fair discussion of the various clauses of the bill of lading could hardly be looked for.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that copies of the proposed new bill of lading should be sent to you as Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Bengal, and that you be requested to say if the form suggested is approved by the mercantile community or not, and should it be that it is not approved, that the Chamber of Commerce be requested to appoint some half-dozen gentlemen, members of Calcutta firms here, to meet a similar number of shipowners in London, by whose joint endeavours a form of bill of lading suitable to the growing necessities of the trade may be produced, which will be accepted both by merchants and shipowners.

It is with the view of an early and an amicable arrangement being come to on the basis suggested that we now address you, and we respectfully solicit your best efforts to promote it. It is anticipated that before the expiry of three months we shall have the pleasure of hearing from you.

We are, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

JOHN CORRY, *Chairman of Meeting.*

S. A. RALLI, *Ralli Brothers.*

J. BLACKWOOD.

GEORGE DUNCAN, *by authority* JOHN CORRY.

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Calcutta.

From Chamber.—Calcutta, 2nd June 1880.

The President and Committee of this Chamber desire me to acknowledge the receipt of the letter dated the 22nd April last, from yourself and Messrs. S. A. Ralli, J. Blackwood, and George-Duncan, as constituting a publicly appointed Committee to superintend the preparation of a Bill of Lading for sailing ships engaged in the Calcutta trade with London and other home ports; and to inform you that the subject of your communication is receiving their careful consideration, and that it will be immediately submitted to the members of the Chamber and others who are interested in the representation you have been pleased to make.

Calcutta, 23rd June 1880.

In continuation of my acknowledgment on the 2nd instant of your letter of 22nd April, I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to inform you that the following Resolutions were adopted at a Special Meeting, held on Monday the 21st instant, to which all the signatories to the protest of last year as well as all members of the Chamber were invited:—

1st.—That the proposed Bill of Lading in all its clauses be referred to a Committee of six merchants in London representing the Calcutta Trade, with full powers to act in the matter, and to settle the exact form of Bill of Lading for ships sailing between Calcutta and any port in the United Kingdom.

2nd.—That the following gentlemen be invited by the Chamber to arrange between themselves for six of their

number to act on the Committee referred to in the first Resolution, namely:—

R. E. BICKFORD, Esq.,	of Messrs. MORISON, BICKERDIKE & Co.
W. BLACKWOOD, Esq.	" BLACKWOOD, CONOR & Co.
J. N. BULLEN, Esq.	" KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.
O. V. ERSSTADSEN, Esq.	" *ERNSTHANSÉN AND ØSTERLEY.
F. W. HILGERS, Esq.	" F. W. HILGERS & Co.
W. MACFARLANE, Esq.	" H. B. MUIR & Co.
E. A. MAYBOGDARD, Esq.	" TAYNOR & Co.
P. J. NICOLAS, Esq.	" KELLY & Co.
STEPHEN RALLI, Esq.	" RALLI BROTHERS.
H. REINHOLD, Esq.	" REINHOLD & Co.

The meeting considered it expedient to invite ten gentlemen engaged in the Calcutta Trade in order to anticipate the possibility of any of the six who may have been formally nominated not being able to take a part in the conference; and it is believed no difficulty will arise in forming a Committee of six to represent Calcutta interests, and to promote the important object entrusted to their experience and judgment, and in conjunction with your goodself and the gentlemen who may act with you to arrive at an arrangement which will finally determine the form of Bill of Lading which may be accepted both by shipowners and merchants.

London, 23rd July 1880.

I am directed by Mr. Corry to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo, giving the names of ten gentlemen from whom six are to be selected between themselves to represent Calcutta interests on the Bill of Lading question, and I am to state to you that Mr. Corry reciprocates the hope that this important question may in a short time be settled.

Calcutta, 28th June 1880.

In continuation of my letter of the 23rd instant, I am directed to inform you that the Madras Chamber of Commerce having expressed a wish to be represented at the Bill of Lading Conference, and that Mr. W. Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., should be recognised as their nominee, I am directed by the Committee of this Chamber to request you will be so good as to accept the Madras Chamber's proposition, and to give all due consideration to any suggestions Mr. Macfarlane may submit.

From Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 16th June 1880.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, I have the pleasure, by direction of my Committee, to hand you a printed copy of the correspondence which has been furnished to the members of this Chamber and others who signed the protest forwarded in August last to the Chairman of the General Shipowners' Society, London.

A special meeting has been convened for Monday the 21st instant, for the purpose of appointing representatives of the Indian trade to meet the London Shipowners at a conference to settle the Bill of Lading question, and my Committee will not fail to submit to the meeting the desire of your Chamber that your local interests should also be represented, and to communicate to you the instructions that may be addressed to the gentlemen who may be nominated.

As I am afraid this letter will scarcely reach you in time for declaring your nominee so as to place his name before the meeting on Monday, I have sent a message by telegraph as at foot.

Please telegraph your proposed representative at the Bill of Lading Conference for submission to meeting here next Monday. Your letter answered.

Calcutta, 24th June 1880.

On the 16th instant I had the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th, and the following day I received your telegram in which you named Mr. William Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., as your representative at the conference with shipowners on the Bill of Lading question.

Previous, however, to the receipt of your message, Mr. Macfarlane's name had already been placed on the list which it was proposed to submit for election.

I have now the pleasure to hand you copy of two Resolutions passed at the special meeting of the Chamber, held on Monday the 21st instant, which will inform you that Mr. Macfarlane was nominated with nine other gentlemen, leaving it to themselves to arrange for any six of their number to act as a Representative Committee. The meeting thought it would be as well to invite the larger number in order to anticipate the possibility of any of the six who may have been formally nominated not being able to take a part in the proceedings.

The meeting did not consider it expedient to issue any definite instructions to the London Committee, or to limit

their authority in their negotiations with the shipowners; they therefore gave them full powers to act according to the best of their judgment, confident that the important interests committed to their charge will receive the fullest consideration that can be devoted to them.

Calcutta, 28th June 1880.

In continuation of my letter of the 24th instant, I am instructed to inform you that your request to be represented by Mr. Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., at the Bill of Lading Conference has been communicated to that gentleman as well as to Mr. Conry, Chairman of the Shipowners' Association, and any representations that may be submitted on your behalf will, no doubt, receive the careful consideration of the conference.

I am at the same time directed to say that, with all desire to associate your Chamber with the proceedings of the meeting held here last week, it did not appear to the meeting that they would be justified in committing you to the terms of the Resolution which gave unlimited powers to their representatives in negotiating with the London Shipowners, and they were of opinion that it would be better that Mr. Macfarlane should be unfettered in that respect as far as your interests were concerned.

A copy of the proceedings of the meeting will follow in a day or two.

From Chamber to H. Reinhold, Esq., London.

Calcutta, 2nd June 1880.

I have had the pleasure to submit to the Committee of the Chamber your letter of 22nd April on the subject of ships' bills of lading, and I am directed to express the Committee's cordial acknowledgment of the active interest you have taken in the matter, and to thank you for your very obliging communication and the report of the proceedings of the meeting which you considerably took the trouble to secure, by engaging shorthand writers, for the purpose of placing members of the Chamber and other signatories to the protest of August last fully in possession of the discussion that took place, and the opinions expressed by the various speakers on that occasion.

The Committee have received a communication from Mr. Corry and the other gentlemen who were appointed to prepare a form of Bill of Lading, and printed copies of it and of your letter and the transcript from the shorthand notes will be immediately circulated in anticipation of an early meeting, to be held with a view to the appointment of representatives of Calcutta firms resident in London to meet shipowners there in order to arrive at a settlement of the question.

Calcutta, 30th August 1880.

I have had the pleasure to receive and place before the Committee of the Chamber your favors of the 21st and 30th of last month.

The Committee desire me to express their satisfaction at learning that the gentlemen named by you have con-

sented to carry out the object of the special meeting of the Chamber, held on the 21st June, and that you have obligingly accepted the office of Honorary Secretary to the conference.

The Committee are confident that the cordial co-operation of the representatives of this Chamber with the shipowners of London will result in a wise and sufficient settlement of a question which is of so much importance to all interests concerned, and that the material differences which have existed will be speedily displaced by a mutual agreement upon all points at issue.

ASSESSORS OF SHIPPING.

The following correspondence speaks for itself. The list of assessors has not yet been submitted to the Committee. They trust that nothing in the Act will be used to prevent the survey, by two competent ship-masters under special circumstances, of ships which have received damage. Such surveys are acknowledged and admitted by underwriters, the people most interested, and it would be a matter for regret were the available surveyors for such cases limited by local legislation to one or two persons however competent.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce,—No. 731, Calcutta, the 31st May 1880.

I am directed to invite the attention of the Chamber of Commerce to the Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1880, published in the *Gazette of India* of the 13th March 1880, and, with reference to section 15, to say that a list of assessors for Calcutta is under preparation, and that, if the Chamber desire to propose the inclusion of the name of any particular person in the list, the Lieutenant-Governor will be very glad to be favoured with their suggestions.

2. With regard to the concluding clause of section 69, I am to request that the Chamber will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with the names of any persons who should, in their opinion, be specially exempted by the local Government from the operation of the section.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.
14th June 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 731 of the 31st May.

With reference to the appointment of assessors under section 15 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1880, the Committee desire me to say that, as the list under preparation by Government may have already anticipated any nomination they could have suggested, they will be glad if you will favor them with the opportunity of considering the list when completed, and of submitting the names of any competent persons who may have been omitted.

In reply to the second paragraph of your letter relative to the provisions of sections 68 and 69 of the Act as to the qualifications of persons practising as Surveyors of shipping, and to the proviso which exempts from this operation the Surveyors for Lloyds and the Bureau Veritas Registers, the Committee submit for the Lieutenant-Governor's consideration that the Surveyors for the American and German Lloyds and similar Registers of shipping should also be specially exempted, as they believe those persons possess all the necessary qualifications for their profession and that their examination for competency should be dispensed with.

INLAND TELEGRAPH TARIFF.

The following correspondence will inform members of the endeavour made by the Committee to obtain a reduction of the rates charged for inland telegraph messages. Although this has not been successful, the Committee are not without hope that a material modification of the tariff will be sanctioned so soon as the revenue will admit of any surplus being applied to a reduction of the rates now levied.

But the charge of double the ordinary rate for a message containing even one word in excess of the present minimum of six words is so heavy and disproportionate, that the Committee have urged that a reduction to two annas for

each word in excess of the first six should be at once conceded.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 21st August 1880.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you on the subject of the present rates for inland Telegraph messages, which it is believed might be considerably modified to the benefit of the general public throughout India, and if not with advantage at least without loss to the State.

The Committee thoroughly recognise the principle that the Telegraph Department should be self-supporting, and that in no way should expenditure be met other than by the revenue received from those who avail of the benefits it affords for quick communication.

In other countries experience has shown that a lowering of rates and a sliding scale of charge, according to the length of the message, has in no way tended to diminish the net profits of their Telegraph Departments.

It is of course impossible to make a fair comparison between results in England or in various countries of the Continent and India, because the distances to be traversed here are, as a rule, so much greater; but nevertheless there must be a point to which the charges can be lowered so as to increase the revenue in a corresponding degree to the increase in expenditure from extra plant and labour required to meet the increased traffic.

From 1868 to 1872, the rate had been 10 words for one rupee, the address being only partially free. This

rate was said to be unremunerative, and in consequence the present tariff of 6 words for one rupee, and no charge for address, was introduced.

The increase in the number of messages during the former period does not appear to have been so great as might have been expected from the changes introduced, but probably a different result would have been brought about had both the charge and the number of words been reduced simultaneously.

The revenue recovered from private messages shows a gradual improvement year by year, if that of 1877-78 be excepted, this last year's sudden increase being due to the famine in Southern India; and it would thus appear that the public here, as in England, are inclined to avail more and more of the facilities for quick communication afforded by the use of the telegraph wires, but the Committee believe that the progress would be more rapid and satisfactory if an improvement was made in the existing tariff.

It is admitted that the address being free the Telegraph Department has to transmit gratuitously about double the number of words contained in each message; and in reference to this it is stated in the Administration Report of 1872-73 that this proportion of unremunerative work is necessarily lessened according as the message increases in length. This the Committee submit is a strong argument in favour of a reduction in charge for words in excess of the regulated number on which the first payment is made, it being clearly to the advantage of the Department to encourage long messages.

I am therefore instructed respectfully to suggest, for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General

In Council, some such modification as the following of the present rates :—

Minimum rate for four words ...	... 12 annas.
Every additional word ...	... 1 anna.

Such a change in the tariff would prove a very general benefit, and would sooner or later, the Committee believe, increase the traffic to such an extent as to justify the reduction.

From Government of India to Chamber.—

No. 383 T. Simla, 5th October 1880.

In forwarding the accompanying copy of Resolution on the subject of the inland telegraph tariff, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council to say that if any facts can be adduced in contravention of those on which the conclusions arrived at by the Government of India in this matter have been based His Excellency will be glad to afford them careful consideration.

2nd.—Though unwilling to increase the burden on the general revenues for the maintenance of the telegraph service, His Excellency would willingly forward any scheme for developing and facilitating communication by telegraph, so long as it could confidently be adopted without risk to the interests of the tax paying community.

RESOLUTION :

Traffic on Inland Telegraph Messages.

Read—

Letter from the Government of Bombay, in the Public Works Department, No. 107-653, dated 3rd July 1880, to the Government of India.

Letter from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, No. 178, dated 6th July 1880, to the Director-General of Telegraphs in India.

Letter from the Director-General of Telegraphs in India, No. 453T, dated 27th July 1880, to the Government of India.

Letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated 21st August 1880, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department.

OBSERVATIONS.—The Government of Bombay remarks in its letter now read :—

"While on the subject of Telegraphs, I am instructed by His Excellency the Governor in Council to point out that the charges are extremely high in India. The charge for 20 words, exclusive of addresses, in Australia is only one shilling. The telegraphs belong to the Government of each Colony, and the receipts for through messages are divided according to mileage by a 'clearing house' arrangement. The distance covered is up to 3,000 miles. In one year, during which His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir J. Fergusson was in South Australia, the number of telegraphic messages in the Colony is believed to have been 50 per cent. of that of postal letters, the charges being one shilling and two pence respectively. It is, therefore, apparent that the cheapness of rate caused the telegraph to be used to an extent unknown in India, or even in the United Kingdom, in proportion to the population, the saving of time in so large a country being considerable.

"I am to state that, if the Government of India would allow the Government of Bombay to try the experiment

"of charging half a rupee for twelve or twenty words for local messages, guaranteeing the present amount derived therefrom. His Excellency the Governor in Council believes the results will be remarkable."

2. The Bombay Chamber of Commerce represent that in comparison with the tariffs in force in the United Kingdom and in Germany, the tariff in India appears to them to be exorbitant, and suggests, for the consideration of Government, the expediency of reduction to a minimum charge of eight annas for four words, with one anna more for every additional word, no charge being made, as at present, for the transmission of the address.

5. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce urge that the experience of other countries has shown that a lowering of rates and a sliding scale of charges according to the length of the message has in no way tended to diminish the profit of their Telegraph Departments; and on this ground they suggest a minimum rate of twelve annas for four words (exclusive of address, which would be free) and one anna for each additional word.

4. These proposals are based on two hypotheses, (I) that the rates for telegraphic messages in India are unduly high, and (II) that a reduction in rates would be followed by an increase in the traffic which would more than compensate for the immediate loss in revenue.

5. The Government of Bombay and the Bombay Chamber of Commerce contend that the Telegraph Tariff of India is unreasonably high, compared with the tariffs in force in other countries; on this point there appears to be some misapprehension of the facts.

6. In Australia the charge, so far as can be ascertained, is one shilling for a minimum of ten words *within the limits of each Colony*. The inter-colonial rates vary from two to three shillings or more for a message of ten words, so that the Indian uniform tariff of one rupee, with free delivery for five miles, for distances which extend to 3,000 miles compares rather favorably than otherwise.

7. In Germany there is a fixed charge of 20 pfennigs, irrespective of length, in addition to a word rate of 5 pfennigs, and the address is charged for.

8. In Great Britain the minimum charge is one shilling, the number of words allowed twenty, the address is free, and a charge is made for delivery of six pence a mile beyond the first mile, and of a shilling a mile if the total distance exceeds three miles. The cost of a single rate message delivered at the average distance from the Telegraph Office at which Indian messages are delivered is one shilling and six pence.

9. In the United States of America the unit message is ten words, the address is free, and there is a charge for delivery beyond half a mile. The tariff is proportional to distance and varies from 25 cents to 1 dollar and a half for distances within 1,000 miles. For distances over 1,000 miles, between State and State, the rate is from 2 to 3 dollars.

10. The Government of India notices the admission made by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that a fair comparison between results in England or in various countries of Europe and India is not possible, because the distances to be traversed here are, as a rule, so much greater; but differences in extent alone form only one, and that

not the most serious, of the difficulties in the way of making a fair comparison of the tariffs of different countries; and, unless the climate, internal resources, average individual prosperity, and social conditions of the countries whose tariffs it is sought to compare be also taken into account, such a comparison must be altogether misleading.

11. The area of India is roughly eight-times that of United Germany, and thirteen times that of Great Britain. The greatest distance a message can be transmitted in England is about 500 miles; in India upwards of 3,000 miles. In Great Britain there is a temperate climate, a population dense, self-governing, and very wealthy, inhabiting a small area; it is a centre of trade, of science and of manufacture, where every appliance of a telegraph is locally made and procurable at very short notice, technical knowledge is there cheap and always available, and consequently a telegraph can be established there at a minimum cost and maintained with the least possible difficulty and expense.

12. In India there is, on the other hand, a tropical climate injurious to the materials of which a telegraph is composed, a country vast and in parts still almost unopened; a population poor, and in the mass ignorant, to whom the telegraph is an exotic; a country that requires to import the greater portion of the material and technical appliances for its telegraphs, and also its principal technical supervision, where it is necessary to keep large stocks of stores at great cost ready for emergencies, and where consequently a telegraph can only be established at very high cost and maintained with difficulty and expense.

13. In the United States, notwithstanding the advantages in climate, appliances, and in the character and means of the inhabitants as a whole, the tariff is considerably higher than in India; and it appears to the Government of India that the moderate simple tariff of one rupee for six words for all distances up to 3,000 miles, with free address and free delivery up to a distance of five miles, compares very favorably with the tariffs in force in other more fortunately situated countries.

14. It is urged, however, in support of the proposal for a reduction in telegraph rates that the adoption of a very low tariff is the only means of securing an adequate revenue; but this contention is not borne out by experience, and the Government of India, with the information before it, is forced to the conclusion that, while in no country and under no circumstances have reductions of the telegraph tariff resulted in a net gain, the instances are rare in which such reductions have not resulted in a loss of revenue.

15. At the commencement of the present year the Government of India, in order to obtain the benefit of an uniform tariff throughout the dominions administered by it, reduced the tariff between India and Burmah from Rs. 1-8 to Re. 1 for six words. The experience of three months' working of this tariff is reported to be that not only has the average cost per message been reduced in exactly the same proportion, showing that there has been no increase in the length of messages, but the number of messages transmitted so far from showing any equivalent increase has absolutely decreased. The decrease is doubtless due to stagnation of trade, but it serves to bear out the contention of the Telegraph Department in this

and other countries that the telegraph traffic follows, particularly in its augmentations, the fluctuations of trade and that it is influenced by the tariff only in a very secondary degree.

16. In the face of these experiences it is obvious that the Government could not look forward with any confidence to obtaining under a reduced tariff any increase in the net revenue, or even to the maintenance of the present net revenue of the Telegraph Department.

17. A low *uniform* tariff is obviously inconsistent with a still lower *local* tariff, and the Government, as at present advised, is not disposed to abandon the important principle of uniformity. The most essential feature of a telegraph tariff is that it shall be simple, intelligible to all, and easy in its application, so that the public shall themselves be able readily to calculate the payments due under all circumstances, and to verify the correctness of the charges made by the departmental employes. The present tariff appears to thoroughly fulfil these conditions.

18. The Government of India has quite recently had the question of a reduction of the inland telegraph tariff under consideration, and is fully alive to the advantages to be anticipated from such a measure when it can be introduced without retarding the progress of the Telegraph Department towards commercial solvency. There are undoubtedly conditions under which it might be a just and wise policy to fix the charges for telegraphic intercommunication at so low a rate that the cost of the administration must exceed the revenue, but such conditions only exist in India at present to a limited extent, if at all, and the Government of India is not prepared to adopt

any revision of the tariff, the effect of which would be to burden the general revenues in order that the senders of telegrams might be enabled to transmit them at a lower rate than the cost price.

19. The introduction and maintenance of the telegraph system in India has proved in the past extremely costly; and for very many years the general revenues of the country have suffered to provide for the maintenance of an institution from which, apart from its administrative and political value, only a very limited section of the community has reaped the benefit; and the time has now come when the Government may reasonably expect that the yearly expenditure of the department, including interest on the capital, shall be covered by the receipts from the public, *plus* the value of the messages despatched on the service of the Government itself.

20. With the existing tariff the Telegraph Department is now at length beginning to pay its working expenses, but the increased revenue of recent years is in great measure due to exceptional and temporary causes, and, although the stimulus given may not be altogether barren of permanent results, a continuance of the tariff at the present rate cannot be calculated upon, and it is improbable that the net revenue will for many years to come be sufficient to cover the working expenses in addition to interest on the capital invested. But in any future modification of the tariff that experience may show to be desirable this object must be kept steadily in view.

21. The Capital Account of the Telegraph Department includes numerous items, such as charges consequent on military expeditions, cost of temporary and abandon-

ed lines, &c., &c., which are either properly chargeable to "revenue," and should have been charged off in the year in which they were incurred, or which have not added to the permanent value of the plant. The Government does not expect that the Telegraph Department should earn interest on a capital thus improperly inflated; and the Capital Account of the Telegraph Department should be carefully scrutinized with a view to the elimination of such items and to the arrival at a fair valuation of the lines and appliances as they now stand, in communication with the Accountant-General of the Public Works Department.

22. On the capital value thus arrived at the Government expects that the telegraph revenue shall yield a fair interest after paying its working expenses. When the revenue shall be found to yield more than sufficient to cover these charges, the Governor-General in Council considers that such surplus may properly be applied to reducing the tariff in the interest of the senders of messages, and will be prepared to consider favorably any proposals that may be put forward with that object.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be communicated to the Director-General of Telegraphs in India for information and guidance, in reply to his letter No. 453T, dated 27th July, and to the Accountant-General, Public Works Department, for information and guidance.

That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Government of Bombay in the Public Works Department for information, in reply to its letter No. 10T-653, dated 3rd July 1880.

That copies be sent to the Chambers of Commerce in Bombay and Bengal, in reply to their letters dated 6th July and 21st August respectively, and to the Chambers of Commerce in Madras, Rangoon and Karachi for information.

And, further, that this Resolution be published in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India*.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 15th November 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 383 of the 5th of last month, forwarding copy of a Resolution relative to the tariff of rates for inland telegraph messages, in reply to their representation of the 21st August on that subject.

They have attentively considered the grounds upon which the Governor-General in Council has arrived at a conclusion adverse to the suggestions which they submitted, and they regret to learn that His Excellency is not at present prepared to adopt the modification of the tariff which they had hoped would have recommended itself to his Lordship's judgment.

The Committee, under all the circumstances set forth in the Resolution, will not now press their views further on the Government, save in respect to one amendment of the tariff which has perhaps not been sufficiently considered.

The decision of Government involves the continued heavy charge of double the ordinary rate for any message containing even one word in excess of the present minimum limitation.

A message containing six effective words costs the sender one rupee, or at the rate of 2 annas 8 pies per word; whereas, a message of seven words costs two rupees, or at the rate of 4 annas 9 pies per word.

For transmitting the former message of 6 words, and assuming the address and official instructions amount to 7 words, the Telegraph Department receives nearly 1 anna 3 pies per word; whereas, for the message of 7 words the Government receives at the rate of 2 annas 3 pies per word.

They respectfully submit that these are unfairly disproportionate charges, tending to discourage the transmission of the longer messages, which are a material advantage to the Telegraph administration, it being admitted that the proportion of unremunerative work by the gratuitous transmission of address, official instructions, &c., &c., is lessened according as the message increases in length.

The Committee therefore represent for the favorable consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, that while the present rate of one rupee for 6 words is continued, the charge for each additional word shall not exceed 2 annas.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION IN THE TOWN AND SUBURBS OF CALCUTTA.

The subject of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta having been represented by the Chairman of the Municipality for the con-

sideration of the Government of Bengal, the Committee were requested to submit to the Lieutenant-Governor their opinion whether a demand really existed among the mercantile community for the proposed service; and they stated, in reply, that in their experience such necessity had not arisen, but that municipal purposes might be advantageously served by the establishment of small local branches at the principal police stations. At the same time the Committee suggested that as the Telegraph Office is at a considerable distance from the northern part of the town, and much time is lost in sending and receiving messages, a branch might be opened at some locality easy of access to European and Native merchants, whose places of business are so far distant from the Head Office in Dalhousie Square as to render the suggested branch a very appreciable arrangement.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—

No. 855, Calcutta, 17th September 1880.

I am directed to send herewith copy of a letter No. 1728, dated the 19th July last, received from the Chairman of the Calcutta Municipality on the subject of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta, and to request that the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce may be moved to favor the Lieutenant-Governor with their opinion whether there is really a demand among the mercantile

community for such telegraphic service as is contemplated in Mr. Beverley's letter.

From Chairman of the Corporation of the Town of Calcutta to Government of Bengal,—No. 1728. Calcutta, 19th July 1880.

I am desired by the Municipal Commissioners for the town of Calcutta to invite the attention of Government to the expediency of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta.

2. Putting aside the offices attached to the Railway stations at Howrah and Sealdah, there is at present but one public Telegraph Office, viz., that in Dalhousie Square, for the use of all the inhabitants of the town and suburbs, numbering at least three quarters of a million souls, and occupying an area of something like 35 square miles.

3. This single office, moreover, is only available for sending messages to distant places; there are absolutely no facilities whatever open to the public for communicating by telegraph either within the town itself or between the town and the suburbs.

4. The Municipal Commissioners are of opinion that the time has arrived when the Government should, for the sake of public convenience, offer facilities for telegraphic communication within the town and suburbs; and they believe that, with a judiciously selected network of offices and a reduced fee, a metropolitan telegraphic service might eventually be made a source of considerable profit to the public revenue.

Such a service would not only benefit the commercial and trading community of Calcutta, but would be of advantage to the Government itself for administrative and police purposes. On the outbreak of fires, for instance, an improved system of telegraphic communication would be invaluable.

5. Under these circumstances, I am to ask that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor may be moved to take the subject into consideration, and to pass such orders in the matter as to him may seem expedient.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 27th September 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt—on the 23rd instant—of your letter No. 855 of the 17th September, forwarding copy of a representation from the Chairman of the Corporation of the Town of Calcutta, dated the 19th July last, on the subject of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta.

In reply to the inquiry instituted by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor whether there is really a demand among the mercantile community for such telegraphic service as is contemplated by the Chairman of the Corporation, I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber to say that, in their experience, such demand has not at any time existed, and that present arrangements are, on the whole, sufficient for their purposes.

The Telegraph Office is at a somewhat inconvenient distance from places of business in the northern part of

the city, and a branch office in that locality—say at a point that could be easily reached by merchants in *Burra Bazar*—would be of great advantage to both European and native merchants by saving the time taken in sending messages to Dalhousie Square, and a corresponding convenience would result to the Head Office by diminishing the distance its messengers have now to go.

In the facilities for telegraphic service as suggested by Mr. Beverley were actually available to the masses of the inhabitants of the city and its suburbs, the Committee very much doubt if they would be resorted to to the extent he anticipates, or, to any appreciable extent, supersede present means of inter-communication; but they concur in his opinion that Municipal purposes would be advantageously served; and perhaps the principal police stations might be utilised as offices for small local branches.

This arrangement would appear, however, to be one for determination by the Corporation, and if the Commissioners saw their way clearly to a profitable, or, at least, a self-supporting scheme, probably His Honor would not object to its introduction.

DEPARTURE OF MAIL STEAMERS FROM BOMBAY.

The action taken by the Committee in this matter is fully set forth in the communications addressed by them to the Director-General of the Post Office and to the Government of India. The latter is in reply to a reference made by

the Secretary of State, who had been urged by various memorialists at home to arrange for the departure of the mail steamer from Bombay so as to admit of the Indian mails reaching London in ample time for acknowledgment by the Friday evening despatch from London. To that end the Marquis of Hartington is of opinion that the plan of a fixed day of the week all the year round must be abandoned, and the former system of alternate days in the North-East and South-West Monsoons reverted to, and the steamers' departure from Bombay arranged for Thursdays and Mondays: this would involve the mails leaving Calcutta on Mondays and Fridays.

Members will notice that while the Committee have accepted the latter day as the most convenient for closing mercantile correspondence, they have strongly protested against a Monday mail-day, since it would inevitably involve work on Sundays.

The present plan of a Wednesday closing has been found to be the most suitable, but the Committee have expressed their willingness, in the general interests, to waive their former objections to this arrangement being disturbed, provided Tuesday be fixed for the mails leaving Calcutta, although the Committee apprehend

that even that day will be found excessively inconvenient.

From Director-General of the Post Office of India to Chamber,—No. 93. Calcutta, the 5th April 1880.

Referring to the suggestion made in your letter to the Government of India, dated the 19th February last, to the effect that the train service across India might be accelerated by 2 or 3 hours, I have the honor to observe that an acceleration of the ordinary train once a week, when carrying the overland mail, would disorganize the entire railway mail services throughout India, the timing of which depends upon the trunk line from Calcutta to Bombay; and I do not think that it would be possible, under present conditions, to accelerate the daily service.

2. But the object in view might perhaps be attained by making the train leave Calcutta 2 hours earlier, *i.e.*, at 7 P.M. (Calcutta time) instead of 9 P.M. as at present. This would involve a closing of the Calcutta General Post Office at 6 P.M.

3. I may mention that the advantages of an earlier arrival of the train at Bombay would probably be found to be even greater than the Chamber suppose, for by allowing the steamer to leave Bombay by 10-30 A.M. instead of at 7 P.M., it would be possible to land the mails in London 15½ hours earlier, *i.e.*, at 10½ A.M. on Wednesday instead of at 2 A.M. on Thursday. At present 24 hours are allowed for transit through Egypt on the homeward route (instead of 17 hours as on the outward route) because the homeward mails are due at Suez at 7 A.M. and 17 hours of Egyptian transit would bring the hour

of starting from Alexandria to midnight. Vessels cannot leave the Alexandria harbour till about 7 A.M., and so 7 hours have been added to the allowance for Egyptian transit on the homeward route. But with a start from Bombay at 10-30 A.M. the mails would reach Suez at 10-30 P.M. and an interval of 17 hours (as in the outward voyage) for Egyptian transit would allow of the mails leaving Alexandria by 3-30 P.M. on Thursday instead of 7 A.M. on Friday.

4. Perhaps, therefore, the Chamber will see their way to consider favorably the suggestion of starting the train from Calcutta at 7 P.M. (Calcutta time.) This change would, I believe, be of advantage to Allahabad, Agra, Simla, and Lahore.

Calcutta, 29th May 1880.

Your letter No. 93, of the 5th ultimo has been circulated among the members of the Chamber in order to obtain their individual opinions upon the arrangement suggested by you, namely, closing the mails at the General Post Office at 6, instead of 7 P.M., and starting the train from Howrah at 7, instead of 9 P.M.; and I am now directed by the Committee to state, in reply, that a large majority of the members have recorded their votes in favor of the proposition.

At the same time I am instructed to inform you that the majority have voted for the earlier closing of the mail on Wednesday, as that day is generally and strongly preferred to Tuesday or any other day of the week for the despatch of the overland post.

Members have no doubt been influenced also by the advantage you point out of the homeward mails leaving Bombay sufficiently early on Saturday to admit of the steamer arriving at Suez, and the mails starting from Alexandria, considerably in advance of the present hours of arrival and departure, and thereby reaching London in a correspondingly shorter time.

The Committee are bound, however, to place before you the views expressed by other members,—especially those who represent the banking business of the city—who are opposed to any change in the present arrangements which may tend to curtail the time at their disposal for posting their despatches. They are of opinion that by the co-operation of the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsular Railway Companies, the train which carries the homeward mails may be materially accelerated by avoiding stoppages at many of the minor stations, and minimising the detention at the principal halting places, Allahabad, Jubbulpore, &c., by which means the present closing hour and time for starting from Howrah can be continued, and any inconvenience to the travelling public which might follow the suggested change thereby avoided.

The Committee admit that there is much force in the views expressed by the minority; and in placing the two sides of the question before you, they believe that the interests of all concerned may be fully consulted by the following plan:—

The Committee propose that the daily mail service should be carried on by a train leaving Howrah at 7 P.M., as suggested by you; but that on Wednesday a special

overland mail train with a Post Office van and a limited number of carriages should be despatched, as at present, at 9 P.M., in addition to the ordinary train at 7 P.M.

By closing the mails at the Post Office at 6 o'clock the bulk of the correspondence would most likely go forward by the ordinary train, and probably the earlier departure would suit most passengers better than the 9 P.M. departure. The train would be due at Mokameh at 5-41 the next morning, and by the time appointed for leaving that station—say at 6-11—it would be overtaken by the special mail train, and the van and carriages could either be joined on to it or the mails and passengers transferred.

The Committee apprehend that the cost of such special mail would not be more than could be met by a moderate late-letter fee on every cover sent, and by an addition to the ordinary fare for passengers who may prefer to travel by it.

They will be glad if you will communicate with the Railway Companies on the subject, and oblige the Chamber with the result of your reference and your opinion on the proposal now submitted.

Calcutta, 24th July 1880.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been called to a letter addressed to you by the Bombay Chamber, and published in the *Bombay Gazette* newspaper of the 19th instant.

I am instructed to refer to this letter, and for your consideration to notice some of the arguments brought

forward in favour of a Friday departure of the mail steamer from Bombay.

The Bombay Chamber of Commerce have stated that apparently Calcutta merchants can advance no better reason for their objection, to a Tuesday mail day than a mere predilection for Wednesday, but it is submitted that the same arguments which have been advanced by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce against the closing of the mails there on Monday apply as strongly against the mails being closed at Calcutta on Tuesday.

If, as is stated in the letter referred to, Bombay merchants have found that one day does not give sufficient time in which to prepare documents for their one article of export, so Calcutta merchants have found from experience (acquired when mails during a portion of the year were closed here on Tuesday) that two days are insufficient for the preparation of all that is required, having regard to the great variety of articles which constitute the trade of this port.

The Bombay Chamber make light of the circumstance that an evening departure of the steamer involves a delay of some eight hours not only of the Calcutta mails but of the whole of the mails of India, (excepting those of Bombay,) but it must surely be obvious that the Bombay proposal sacrifices the interests of the many to those of the few.

It is suggested that, in opposing the proposition for a Tuesday mail day, we lose sight of the interests of London merchants and of those living in the northern towns of Great Britain; but this is not so: my Committee are well aware of the inconvenience caused to

their correspondents by the present system, whereby letters are often delivered only on the out-going mail day; but it is believed that under the arrangement proposed by you in your letter No. 93 of the 5th April last the mails would be delivered in London and the northern towns of the United Kingdom on days which would be found suitable.

In conclusion, I am directed to say that my Committee feel sure that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce would re-consider their request for the continuance of a Wednesday mail day for Calcutta, if it could be shown (as stated by Bombay) that the general public in India and at home would benefit by the mail being closed here on some other day. They will strongly object, however, to be inconvenienced by a Tuesday mail day, merely in order that Bombay merchants shall have what they so pertinaciously advocate, notwithstanding that an alternative has been suggested which, although not thoroughly agreeable to Bombay, would, it is believed, meet the wishes of all others concerned, and give to the Western port the Saturday half-holiday which formerly was all that was asked for.

From Government of India to the Chamber.

No. 2880, Simla, 18th September 1880.

I am directed by the Governor-General in Council to request that you will lay before your Chamber the accompanying despatches from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India to the Government of India, No. 130, dated 22nd April, and Nos. 270 and 271, both dated 19th August, transmitting memorials from the Chambers

of Commerce of Manchester, Huddersfield, Glasgow, Liverpool and Dundee, from the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, and from the "Leading Firms and Companies in London interested in the Indian Mail Service," in which the memorialists represent the inconvenience felt in Great Britain in consequence of the despatch of the English mails from Bombay on Saturday.

2. In his despatch No. 271, Lord Hartington also informs the Government of India that on the 5th August he received a very important deputation of gentlemen representing the various Chambers of Commerce, Banks, and Mercantile bodies interested in this question.

3. In order to meet the views of the mercantile community of Great Britain in this matter, which appear to the Marquis of Hartington to be reasonable, His Lordship suggests that the mails be despatched from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season and on Monday in the monsoon.

4. This proposal assumes that the mails will continue to leave Bombay in the evening as heretofore. The Governor-General in Council, however, was disposed, before the receipt of Lord Hartington's despatch, to conclude that the interests of the general mercantile community in India required that the mails should be despatched from Bombay, not, as heretofore, in the evening, but in the morning, as soon as possible after the arrival of the mail train in Bombay. This alternative certainly involves the detention through the night of the mails originating in Bombay itself and the neighbourhood; but, owing to the impracticability of the mail steamer leaving Alexandria Harbour in darkness, a morning despatch

from Bombay as compared with the despatch of the mails the previous night would cause a delay of only eight hours in the delivery of the mails in London: or, putting the case otherwise, if the mails are despatched in the morning from Bombay, instead of, say, eight hours later, in the evening, they will be delivered in London sixteen hours earlier.

5. It seems possible that, under these circumstances, the mercantile community of Great Britain might be satisfied if the mails were despatched from Bombay on Friday morning in the fair season and Tuesday morning in the monsoon, which would involve the closure of the mails at—

	In the fair season.	In the monsoon.
Calcutta ...	... Tuesday.	Saturday.
Madras ..	... Wednesday.	Sunday.

6. The interests of the mercantile communities of the Presidency Towns appear to the Governor-General in Council to be almost exclusively concerned in this matter: the Government and the general community are, comparatively, indifferent as to the days of the week on which the mails leave Bombay.

7. I am, accordingly, to request that you will move your Chamber to state, at its earliest possible convenience, its final views upon the whole subject, noting—

1st.—Whether it desires that the mails should start from Bombay in the morning at 10 A.M., or in the evening at sunset.

2ndly.—Whether, in its opinion, the interests of the mercantile community will suffer if the principle of one fixed day for the departure of the mails from Bombay be surrendered.

3rdly.—If that principle should be maintained, on what fixed day in the week the mail should leave Bombay.

4thly.—If the day of departure should vary with the season, what day should be fixed in the fair season, and what in the monsoon.

8. In dealing with this subject, the Chamber of Commerce will, doubtless, bear in mind that from the nature of the case it is impracticable to make such arrangements as would be the most convenient possible, even for each of the three Presidency Towns; and that the arrangements which are required in the interests of Great Britain cannot, apparently, be made to conform to the interests of the Presidency Towns in India. Under these circumstances, it seems necessary that those whose interests conflict should each concede as much as they can without sacrificing what seems to them indispensable. It is desirable therefore that the Chamber, while stating the arrangement which would most completely suit the local convenience, should specify the extent to which it considers the local interest might, out of consideration for the interests of other places, be surrendered without too great inconvenience.

9. It will be understood that, inasmuch as the interests of the mercantile communities of India and Great Britain appear to conflict in this matter, it may not be in the power of the Governor-General in Council to secure the adoption of the alternative desired in India, or which may seem to him the best in the general Indian interest. All that His Excellency in Council can do is to take care that the interests of India are clearly recognised and fully weighed.

From the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India No 130 (Financial),—dated 22nd April 1880.

With reference to my despatch, dated the 30th October

1879, No. 413, I forward herewith for your information a copy of a letter* from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, representing the inconvenience occasioned to the mercantile communities in the north of England and in Scotland by the despatch of the mails from Bombay on Saturday; and I shall be glad to learn whether you can see your way to the adoption of an arrangement which will obviate this inconvenience.

From B. ARMITAGE, Esq., President, Chamber of Commerce, Manchester, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 25th March 1880.

When a deputation from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce had the honor of an interview with Your Lordship on the 6th February last, the opportunity was taken of pointing out the serious inconvenience suffered by the mercantile communities of Manchester, Liverpool, and other towns in the north of England and in Scotland, by the arrangement under which the Indian mails were timed to arrive just before the closing and despatch of those outward. In illustration, I have now respectfully to point out that last week and the week preceding the letters from India were delivered on Friday, those to India despatched at 11-35 the same morning.

The present week's mail has arrived in Manchester on Thursday; even this allows too short a time for fully answering letters; whilst in the two instances of later arrival, and which may be of frequent occurrence, it is manifest that the inconvenience must be very great.

Your Lordship will no doubt have been informed that the Chamber of Commerce of Bombay has represented that inconvenience in equal, if not greater, degree is entailed at that port by the despatch of the mail steamers thence on Saturday evening; and is strongly supported by the Bombay Government in memorialising for the closing of the mails there on Friday evening.

These suggestions I am desired by the Directors of the Manchester Chamber earnestly to recommend to Your Lordship.

From the Secretary of State for India,—to the Government of India, No. 270 (Financial), dated 19th August 1880.

In continuation of Lord Cranbrook's despatch of the 22nd April last, No. 130, I forward herewith copies of letters* from the Incorporated Cham-

bers of Commerce at Huddersfield and Glasgow, and from the Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, and from Viscount Sandon on the part of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, together with copies of the memorials referred to therein; and I request that I may be furnished as early as possible with a reply to the enquiry contained in the despatch above referred to, as to the possibility of adopting an arrangement by which the great inconvenience now felt in regard to the arrival of the Indian mails in England may be removed.

From C. MILES Esq., Secretary, Incorporated Chamber of Commerce, Huddersfield, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 17th July 1880.

I have the honor to transmit to your Lordship the enclosed memorial of the Council of this Chamber on the

subject of the Indian mails, and trust it will receive Your Lordship's favorable consideration.

To the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 17th July 1880.

The memorial of the Huddersfield Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.

SHEWETH,—That six months' experience of the working of the Indian mails under the new Time Table has afforded abundant proof that the objections to the arrangement, which at the outset were expressed regarding it, were well founded. The arrival of the mail on Thursday does not allow proper and sufficient time for letters to be replied to by the next return mail. This is found to be the case even in London, where the outward mail closes on Friday. In other commercial cities of the United Kingdom the inconvenience is still greater, as in those places the mail arrives either after or just before the close of the outward mail.

As the period for arranging the new Time Table for the year 1881 is approaching, Your memorialists would respectfully but earnestly request Your Lordship to restore the system which was in force previously, whereby the arrival of the mail in London took place in the early part of each week. The change from that to the present plan, although due entirely to the decision of the Government of India, has not, your memorialists believe, proved acceptable even in India; whilst in this country it has had the effect of almost completely destroying the advantages of the accelerated service which the Government made such strenuous efforts to secure under the new mail contract.

From I. H. GUYTHORP, Manager, Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India. Dated 20th July 1880.

I have the honor to enclose a memorial* addressed to the Secretary of State for India and signed by the leading Firms and Companies in London interested in the Indian Mail Service, requesting His Lordship to induce the Government of India to reconsider their decision fixing Saturday as the day for the departure of the mails from Bombay, and restore the system of the mails from India arriving in London in the early part of each week.

From W. C. MELAINS, Esq., Secretary, Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India.—Dated 20th July 1880.

I have the honor to enclose two memorials* addressed to the Secretary of State for India,—one signed by the Leading Firms and Companies in Manchester, the other signed by the Chamber of Commerce Bradford,—requesting His Lordship to induce the Government of India to reconsider their decision fixing Saturday as the day for the departure of the Indian mails from Bombay; and I shall feel greatly obliged if you will bring these memorials to His Lordship's notice, and ascertain if he can appoint a day for receiving a deputation on the subject.

From M. ANDERSON Esq., Secretary, Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, Glasgow, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 27th July 1880.

I beg to hand you herewith a memorial by this Chamber on the subject of the irregular delivery of the mails

* These memorials are identical with that forwarded by the Huddersfield Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.

from India, China, and Australia, and praying for such alterations as will ensure a regular and earlier delivery.

To the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 25th July 1880.

The memorial of the Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures in the City of Glasgow.

SHEWETH,—That in the month of February last your memorialists brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the great inconvenience which merchants, manufacturers, and others in this city suffered from irregularity and delay in delivery of the weekly mails from India, China and Australia carried by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company.

The mails for the East have, for many years, been made up in the provinces upon Thursday of each week for despatch by Friday's mail from London; and this arrangement, having been found suitable and convenient, is still retained.

Since the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company, which commenced in December last, it has, however, been found quite impracticable in most cases to reply by the outgoing Friday's mail to correspondence due by that week's inward mail.

The following statement will show the dates upon which the mails were delivered in this city from the 19th December till 16th June last:—

One mail on Wednesday.

Eight mails on Thursday.

Fourteen mails on Friday.

One mail on Saturday.

Two mails on Monday succeeding.

The mails carried by the Messageries Maritimes Company, leaving the East a week after those despatched by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company, are generally delivered in this country only two days later, thus saving several days on the passage.

Your memorialists feel the delay by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company to be a serious public inconvenience, and they therefore respectfully pray that Your Lordship may take this matter into your consideration, and that arrangements be made to ensure a regular and earlier delivery in the provinces, in no case later than Wednesday in each week, so as to allow of a reply being sent by the outward mail of the same week.

From Viscount SIMON, Westminster, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 26th July 1880.

I beg to transmit to you a memorial from the Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool on the subject of the Eastern Mail Service, and to beg your careful consideration of the subject. I shall be obliged to you to be so good as to forward to me a reply which I may send to the Chamber.

To the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 22nd July 1880.

The memorial of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce, Liverpool.

SHEWETH,—That several representations have been made to your memorialists, pointing out that the apprehensions entertained with regard to the satisfactory working of the Eastern Mail Service under the new Time Table have had abundant proof in the serious inconveniences to

which the existing arrangement has given rise during the past six months at home and in the East.

2. That in especial the Chamber of Commerce at Bombay have called the attention of your memorialists to the serious inconveniences experienced by merchants and traders there through the Saturday evening departure thence, the statements regarding which have already been communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

3. That, under the new Time Table, the Eastern mails become due in London at 2 A.M. on Thursday, where it is deemed that sufficient time is not afforded for letters to be replied to by the next outgoing mail, which closes on Friday.

4. That as regards the large cities and towns in the provinces, as well as in the provinces generally, the new Time Table is found to operate most unsatisfactorily, and to give rise to even still greater inconvenience, as in those districts the Eastern mail arrives either after or just before the close of the outward mail.

5. That no port or place being more deeply interested in the proper adjustment of mail services to the needs of the commercial community than the Port of Liverpool, and in especial with regard to the Eastern Mail Service, your memorialists accordingly communicated with the merchants of this port trading with the East on the subject of the representations referred to, and the feeling is unanimous here that the Time Table now in force gives rise to most serious inconveniences.

6. Your memorialists therefore pray that there will be, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, a return to the system whereby the arrivals of the mails in London from

the East took place earlier in the week, or that such other measures will be adopted as will remove the existing grievances of which complaint is made, as well as amply facilitate postal communications with and from the East.

From the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, No. 271 (Financial), dated 19th August 1880.

In continuation of my despatch of this day's date, No. 270, on the subject of the date of the mails leaving Bombay, I forward a copy of a further memorial* from the Chamber of Commerce at Dundee; and I have to inform Your Excellency that on the 5th instant I received at this office a very important deputation of gentlemen representing the various Chambers of Commerce, Banks, and Mercantile Bodies interested in the question.

2. A strong feeling was expressed by them in favor of a restoration of the system under which letters used to be delivered in London on Monday, which would imply a departure from Bombay on Wednesday in the fair season and on Monday during the monsoon.

3. It was suggested that if it was necessary to have a fixed day for the departure from Bombay throughout the year Tuesday would be the most suitable; but this is open to the objection that the mails would arrive in London on Sunday during the larger portion of the year. A departure from Bombay on Wednesday would seem to meet the views of all those in the United Kingdom who are interested in the subject, except that during the monsoon letters would not be delivered in Scotland in time for a reply the same week.

* Identical with that from Huddersfield, see p.2.

4. I am much impressed with the importance of meeting the views of the mercantile community in this matter, which appear to me to be reasonable, and I cannot avoid the conclusion that the plan of having one fixed day of the week for the departure from India all the year round must be given up. If this concession be made by India, the precise days to be fixed for the departure of the mails from Bombay may be left to be mainly determined by the convenience of the mercantile community in India, subject to the condition that the mail shall arrive in London not later than Tuesday. So far as I am able to judge, a despatch from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season and Monday in the monsoon will best secure this result, as this will admit of the mails leaving Calcutta on Monday and Friday, and Madras on Tuesday and Saturday, respectively, arriving in London in the fair season on Tuesday and in the monsoon on Monday.

5. It is understood that the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company require four months' notice of any change, so that there is an urgent need of settling the dates in order that the Time Tables for 1881 may be prepared forthwith.

6. I shall be glad to learn Your Excellency's reply by telegraph as early as possible.

*From Chamber to Government of India.
Calcutta, 8th October 1880.*

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2880 of the 18th inst., relative to the departure of mail steamers from Bombay and corresponding despatch of mails from Calcutta.

The Committee had hoped to submit for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the views of the Chamber on this subject before business was interrupted by the Doorga Poojah Vacation, but they much regret they have been unable to ascertain, thus far, the opinions of all the members, as the circulation of the correspondence has involved considerable time and delay.

The Committee hope however to be in a position very shortly after the holidays to communicate the final views of the Chamber.

Calcutta, 23rd October 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me, in continuation of my acknowledgment of the 8th instant, to submit the following reply to your letter No. 2880 of the 18th ultimo, regarding the departure of the English mails from Bombay.

The proposition which the Committee of the Chamber have to consider comes before them under no favourable auspices, since His Excellency the Governor-General in Council is apprehensive of inability to secure the adoption of arrangements which may seem to His Excellency the best in the general Indian interest, and Her Majesty's Secretary of State evidently subordinates the convenience of the commercial community of this city to that of the several bodies who have been in communication with His Lordship on the subject.

On the question of a fixed day for the departure from Bombay throughout the year, the Committee direct me to point out that that arrangement was incidentally suggested by them to the Director-General of the Post Office,

when replying to his reference regarding the most convenient alternate days in the north-east and south-west monsoons under the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's new contract, and it appears to have been promptly accepted by him and the Government of India as an improvement on the other system; it received the sanction of Her Majesty's Postmaster-General, and superseded the system of alternate days.

But a restoration of the former arrangement has been of late strongly urged by the Home memorialists, with the view to the mails from India being delivered in London early in the week; and, influenced by their representations, the Secretary of State has come to the conclusion that the plan of having one fixed day of the week for the departure from India all the year round must be given up; and the Marquis of Hartington adds that, if that concession be made by India, the precise days to be fixed for the departure from Bombay may be mainly determined by the convenience of the mercantile community of this country. The Committee respectfully submit that this is a mere semblance of deference to the commercial public of Calcutta, inasmuch as His Lordship shows that a Tuesday arrival in London involves a Monday closing here, for a considerable portion of the year,—an arrangement which would be utterly unsuited to the business requirements of this port.

The Government of India, however, propose Tuesdays for the fair season and Saturdays during the monsoon; but while the former day would be less inconvenient, the latter is unanimously objected to not only as far as Calcutta is concerned, but as involving the closing of mails at Madras on Sundays, which the Committee

apprehend would be regarded as an intolerable hardship by the merchants there, an arrangement far out-weighing the objections to the mails reaching London on those days as recorded in the third paragraph of the Secretary of State's despatch.

The Committee do not underrate the difficulty of reconciling conflicting interests and of conforming the postal arrangements of Presidency towns in India to the convenience of the chief centres of business in Great Britain, and their desire is to suggest such a plan as may be the least disadvantageous to all concerned: but they are constrained to the conclusion that the magnitude of the trade of Calcutta and the consequent amount of mail work involved have not been adequately considered in the proposed arrangements: it is their duty to press this material point on the attention of His Excellency in Council and of the Secretary of State: and on that ground alone the Committee submit that they who conduct the commerce of this port should be permitted to have a preferential voice in a matter which affects interests far more extensive and important than those of the other Presidency towns.

Setting aside, however, the relative claims of Bombay and Madras, and having regard solely to the convenience of merchants in London and the provincial towns of Great Britain, the Committee are of opinion that, according to the table of dates for closing the mails prepared by the Director-General of the Post Office, the arrangements for a fixed day throughout the year and the delivery of mails in London, Manchester, and other important centres of business, on days which would suit their convenience, are not impracticable.

The Table shows that a fixed departure from Bombay on Mondays will admit of the mails reaching London on Saturdays in the fair season, and on Mondays during the monsoon months.

No more convenient arrangement could be devised for, or desired by, the merchants of that city; and a less scrupulous objection to the transmission of mails on Sundays, if they chanced to arrive on those days, would admit of the delivery of letters in provincial places of business almost simultaneously with delivery in London.

But a Monday mail day all the year round would in all probability be found inconvenient to the mercantile community of Bombay; and, if this be so, the Committee think their own former objection to a Tuesday closing in Calcutta might be waived, in order to give that Presidency the advantage of a Friday evening departure. If that would not admit of the mails arriving in London in time to suit the convenience of the English public, the object might be obtained by a Friday morning departure, which, according to the Director-General of the Post Office, would possibly result in a saving of nearly 16 hours.

If, however, the Committee fail in their endeavour to obtain the concurrence and support of the Governor-General in Council and of the Secretary of State in respect of a fixed weekly despatch from India, and if the system of alternate days is to be restored, they have to consider those suggested in the despatch of the Marquis of Hartington and in your letter under reply,—the former proposing Mondays and Fridays, and the latter Tuesdays and Saturdays, for the fair and monsoon seasons respectively.

For the reasons already recorded, the Committee regret they are precluded from accepting either proposition in its entirety; they have stated their objections to closing on Mondays and Saturdays, and they believe sufficient grounds have been shown why those days would not be suitable; they have therefore, to deal only with Friday for the monsoon, and Tuesday for the fair season.

The Committee elect the former without hesitation as it is of all the days in the week the most convenient for Calcutta, and they have already stated that to meet the general interests they waive their objection to Tuesday.

In conclusion, the Committee desire me to express their deep conviction that the convenience of those who despatch a mail should be held paramount to that of the recipients of it. The conditions of life in India are so onerous that any interference with the opportunities for relaxation which at present exist cannot be too strongly deprecated; and the Committee trust that the concession which they make in agreeing to a Tuesday closing will be appreciated and accepted as a settlement of the question.

From Bombay Chamber—Bombay, 11th June 1880.

The departure of the overland mail steamers from Bombay on Saturdays is, as your Chamber is aware, productive of very great inconvenience to the mercantile community of Bombay, and constant complaints have been received from all the Northern Towns in the United Kingdom of the inconvenience which they also suffer under the present arrangements, their letters from India arriving just before the departure of the out going mails to India.

Since the new mail contract came into force at the commencement of this year, the mail steamers have left Bombay at 7 P.M. In February last, however, the Government of India, desirous to make some concession to the wishes of the inhabitants of this city, proposed that the Post Office should close at noon and the mail steamers should leave at 2-30 P.M. on Saturdays, but this arrangement was not approved of, as it would have been most inconvenient to the export trade of this port. A printed copy of the proceedings of the Chamber held on the 2nd March last to discuss this proposal is sent by Book Post for the information of your Chamber.

We are now asked by the Director-General of the Post Office of India to express an opinion as to how far a departure of the mail steamer from Bombay at 10-30 A.M. on Saturdays would meet the convenience of the mercantile community of Bombay. It is obvious that similar objections to those raised by the export trade to the closing of the Post Office at noon would apply to this new proposal; nor is there any other arrangement than a Friday evening departure which would suit the convenience of, the various trading interests concerned.

A Friday evening departure from Bombay would require the closing of the mails in Calcutta on Tuesday evening, but we understand that your Chamber objects to this on the ground that a Tuesday closing is considered too early in the week. It seems to this Chamber that the mercantile community of Calcutta are most unreasonable if their objection merely rests on a predilection for Wednesday instead of Tuesday, and I am desired to ask you, if you will kindly state whether there are any strong or insurmountable reasons why the mail should not leave

Calcutta on Tuesdays, which would suit every interest in India, and would be more convenient for Indian trading interests at home.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 19th June 1880.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 11th instant, on the subject of the departure of the overland mail steamers.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to say that they have, for some time, been aware that the mercantile community of Bombay had found a Saturday noon closing of the mail to be inconvenient, and that it had also proved so to merchants in the northern towns of England, and with a desire to meet the views of all, it has been proposed by the Director-General of the Post Office that the train service from Calcutta be accelerated so as to admit of an earlier arrival by 2 to 3 hours, and a consequent early Saturday morning departure of the steamer from Bombay, which would admit of a Friday evening closing there, and, it is calculated, an earlier delivery of the mails in London by some 15 hours.

This arrangement will no doubt entail considerable inconvenience to the Calcutta community by causing either an inconveniently early closing and despatch of the mails on Wednesday evening, or the payment of extra fees to admit of a special train being despatched at a later hour to overtake the ordinary train which might be started earlier; but, as in the case where the members of this Chamber in deference to Bombay did not press for a Friday night departure from Calcutta (which was then

considered the most suitable of all), so are they now anxious, as far as possible, to meet the views of your Chamber.

My Committee much regret that the commercial community of Calcutta should be considered unreasonable in objecting to a closing of the mails on Tuesday, and they can only say that the question has been put before the members of the Chamber who have emphatically expressed the opinion that, owing to the nature and extent of their produce business and the manner in which it is conducted, Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day, as they have already found from experience, and for the same reasons that the Bombay merchants object to the closing of the mails on Monday.

It seems to this Chamber that the Bombay community have no sufficient grounds for their objection to an early Saturday morning sailing of the steamer, which would practically give them a Friday mail-day, for the Post Office could be closed that evening at any hour found most convenient.

While, therefore, Bombay secures for itself a mail-day most suitable for its own purposes and arrangements, Calcutta presses for the advantage of an additional day for its generally heavier business requirements, as well as to avoid the detention of its overland correspondence for 7 or 8 hours from the time of arrival in the morning till the steamer starts in the evening: and these are circumstances which, it is submitted, should have weight and consideration with your Chamber and the community of your city.

In proposing the arrangement now advocated, Calcutta interests are not the only ones consulted, for it is found

that it would be an advantage to the principal towns of Northern India, and this, the Committee think, should not be lost sight of by the Bombay community when considering what day would be best suitable to themselves.

EXTENSION OF THE TEA TRADE TO THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

In the Committee's last report were noticed the measures taken for the formation of a Syndicate with the view to the introduction into the markets of the Australian colonies of teas produced in this country; and it is very gratifying to record the extremely satisfactory results of the endeavours so far made to gain that important object. The opportunity afforded by the International Exhibition in Melbourne was judiciously availed of to submit for public inspection and sale the various qualities of tea selected as the most suitable to the colonial market; and upon the highly successful issue of their operations the Calcutta Syndicate have valid reasons for congratulation and encouragement to proceed in their well directed enterprise.

In connection with this subject and the development of trade generally between this country and the colonies, the Committee reproduce a very interesting account of a meeting of repre-

sentatives of India, Ceylon, and the Colonies, lately held in Melbourne, which they believe will be regarded as a most promising inauguration of an intercourse which may lead to results of great commercial importance.

A MEETING of gentlemen representing India, the Straits Settlements, Ceylon, the various Australasian colonies, and the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, was held yesterday afternoon at the office of Sir Herbert Sandford, Executive Commissioner of Great Britain, for the purpose of conferring as to the best means which should be adopted for developing a more extensive trade with India and the other Eastern British possessions. The meeting was convened by Mr. E. A. Buck, Commissioner for India, and Sir Herbert Sandford was in the chair.

In opening the proceedings, the chairman expressed his pleasure in presiding, and referred to the fact of the Indian Government having deputed a special representative to the Exhibition. This was the first of the kind at which a gentleman had been directly charged with the supervision of the interests of that nation, and it indicated a desire to establish a most commendable and advantageous commercial connection between its territory and Australasia. He introduced Mr. Buck, who desired to address the meeting on the subject.

Mr. Buck then read the following paper:—

"The main issue underlying the proposition placed before this meeting appears to be, how far the governing or administrative authorities in each of the countries concerned can usefully take action for the promotion of Indo-Australian commerce without over-stepping the limit

at which their action becomes undue interference, and I shall be glad if my apologies for dilating at some little length upon this issue be accepted, because it is an argument used *in limine* by a larger section, that governing or administrative authorities should not meddle with commercial matters at all. My own opinion is that action should be taken with great caution, withdrawn with the utmost expedition when no longer required, and guided at every step by the advice of "experts," under which term, here and elsewhere, I denote those who have commercial experience, acknowledged judgment, and practical acquaintance with the special branches of business concerned, and whose advice, in the person of the representatives of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, we are at this meeting fortunately able to ask. Within these limits I think the duties of administrative authorities may fairly be extended to the following action :—

1. To ascertain what branches of commerce there are which, if developed, will benefit the country which they administer.
2. To attract the attention of experts to them.
3. To clear away national obstacles to their development.
4. To assist, with subsidies or otherwise, pioneering enterprise.

In support of the position which I have assumed, may I be permitted to quote the following remarks from Mr. W. W. Hunter's *Life of Lord Mayo*, one of the first of our Indian administrators, who attached serious importance to the possibilities of Indo-Australian commerce, and who, perhaps, initiated that interest in the subject

which has now found expression in the prominent part taken by the Government of India in this Exhibition :—
 "In developing the trade and exploring the products and capabilities of the country, he (Lord Mayo) held that the duty of the Government ceased when it had by practical experiments pointed out the way and removed the obstacles from it. For the fruits of his efforts, whether in agriculture or commerce, he looked to private enterprise. But he held that it was a proper function of Government, situated as the Indian Government is, to supply the initial knowledge without which private enterprise in India does not come into play." I will first note as briefly as I can the actual steps which the Australian and Indian administrations have already taken to promote commercial relations between the two countries, in order to explain the position in which we now stand. The first honors belong to New South Wales and Victoria, the Governments of which colonies have, by their important and, as regards other countries, generous action in establishing international exhibitions, afforded that opportunity of making inquiry and investigation which I have put forward as the first legitimate duty of a Government. India has seconded their action by responding to the invitation which it received to be represented at their Exhibitions. Attention may here be drawn for a moment to one great difference between what may, for brevity's sake, be termed "white" and "black" countries. In the former, the people are to a very great extent, each in his own line, their own administrators, and generally require very little from Government further than the provision of opportunities for investigation. Not so with India and the colonies of the tropics, in which the

task of collecting facts and initiating enterprise is thrown more completely upon Government itself, sufficient proof of which may be found in the fact that, while the Indian Court of the Exhibition contains several thousand exhibits, it has only been attended by two exhibitors from India, of whom one has already returned, and the other would not have come at all but for the active support and assistance of this Exhibition Committee in India. Government, in accepting the invitation of Australia, had to take the whole of the work upon itself, and I believe that the commissioners from Ceylon and the Straits will admit that the same conditions exist in these colonies. To return to the exhibitions; if I have to express regret that a better display from India was not afforded at Sydney, I am able to qualify the apology by asserting that, but for the New South Wales Exhibition, the interest taken by the Indian Government in this Exhibition would not have been what it is. On that occasion I have the authority of Major Clementi for stating, that only Madras and the department, which I represent, of Agriculture and Commerce in the North-Western Provinces supplied exhibits of any importance, and the exhibits from the latter were only due to the personal belief which I had gained in a private visit to the Melbourne Exhibition of 1875, that a sufficient field was open for Indo-Australian commerce—a field which I can still in 1880 assert to be to a great extent yet lying fallow. Fortunately Major Clementi's able and encouraging letters from Sydney arrived at a time when the earliest invitation from Melbourne, and the strong lead given by the highest authorities in Great Britain, had already induced the Central Government at Calcutta to press upon the Government of every province in India the importance of

taking more general action upon the occasion of this Exhibition; and the completeness of the collections now in the Indian Court is due entirely to the interest and energetic steps taken, in response to the call thus made, by the official representatives of Government in each province, upon whom, and not upon the Central Committee, fell the real burden of doing, each in his own person, the work of several hundred exhibitors. In addition to these steps Government co-operated with the merchants of Calcutta in arranging for the representation of tea interests by a special commissioner. Similar action has been taken in other colonies of Australia, and the presence at Melbourne of the able representatives sent by the Government of each Australasian colony, and the wonderful excellence of their collections, testify to the great official interest which, in these colonies, is permitted to be taken in commercial development, and for an extension of which interest, in the direction of India, I have this day the honor to ask those gentlemen; for I am quite sure that if we leave things as they are without establishing any active agency to continue inquiry, and to keep alive special interest in Indo-Australian trade after the close of the Exhibition, the present apathy on the subject will be renewed. The Central Government gave at the same time a practical token of their own interest in the undertaking by the appointment, as their special representative at Melbourne, of Mr. O'Connor, who in his position of assistant-secretary in the Central Department of Commerce and Government statist, was selected as the official most qualified to give and receive information.

My own official duties were originally intended to end with the completion of consignments from India, my pre-

sence in Melbourne being mainly due to an accidental intention which I had formerly of visiting the colonies on furlough.

Such is an outline of the official action which has led to the present position, and we have now to ask what, if any further, official steps can be taken by us all in order to afford practical effect to the labor and expenditure already incurred. The statements I have brought forward indicate that official action must be continued on behalf of the natives of India, but is it so, with reference to the mercantile community of Australia? I think it is, for the simple reason that the mercantile community of Australia are not yet interested in the transfer of their commercial transactions from lines and grooves already established. My own inquiries lead me to assert positively that a very great deal of ignorance prevails in Australia of the wants and capabilities of India. I am told so by leading commercial men in Melbourne; I am told so by those gentlemen from India who have had better opportunities than I have of testing the condition of the Melbourne and Sydney markets—I refer to Mr. Sibthorpe and Mr. Inglis, my fellow commissioners. I am told so by the statistics of the Indian and Australian Blue-books, which amply testify to the meagreness of commercial relations between the two countries. But, it may be argued, these facts and these statistics merely indicate that more convenient lines of trade are established by Australia elsewhere. I venture to doubt the truth of such a deduction. I believe that Australia, in its earliest youth, falling back, as it naturally would, upon the mother-country for all material requirements which Great Britain could satisfy, and subsequently indenting upon China for a supply of tea, has formed

commercial grooves in those directions, inside which the course of great sections of its trade has hitherto run, and beyond which it has been almost too great a risk for any individual member of the community to travel, notwithstanding the possible advantages (inquiry into which he dare not stop to make) that may ultimately accrue from a divergence. Under this view, it seems to become the eminent duty of the administrative section of both systems of colonies to inquire whether political interests may not be concerned in a closer connection of commercial relations, and, if so, to encourage and facilitate the action of commercial men in its formation. To India the importance of obtaining one of the largest customers in the world (which Australia may at no distant period become) for her tea, spices, and other tropical or semi-tropical produce, would be enhanced by the provision of a system of communication which would throw into it a supply of food or munitions in times of emergency. But the main advantages would be the aid rendered to financial administration in various forms, which I need not now discuss. To Australia would be gained a purchasing country throughout which an enormous machinery exists interested in the promotion of a return trade from Australia, which (as pointed out in article in the *Age* newspaper of this day) can in time expect to supply to India everything that Europe now supplies. In other countries from which Australia now draws tropical supplies there is either a Government (as in China) hostile to European commerce, or (as in Java) with a strong prejudice in favour of its own mother-country. It is also to be remembered that in the not impossible event of a maritime

war in the Eastern seas—*Firstly*, the whole support of the Indian Government would be exerted in protection of Indo-Australian trading lines; *Secondly*, Indian ports would always be open to Australia, while those of China and other foreign countries might, in some eventualities, be closed. Since, therefore, it is very easy to prove that whatever China can produce, so can North India, and whatever Java and other foreign settlements in the tropics can supply, so can South India, Ceylon, and the Straits; it appears to be the plain absolute duty of Governments to incite whatever divergence is possible in the direction of India, and it may be feared that every day's delay in so doing will find in the commercial community more and more hesitation in breaking up the lines into which the first accidents of communication have laid them. Java has, as we all know, made successful exertions to establish a cheap line of communication between herself and Australia, and is quietly assuming a large share of the tropical business done for Australia—a share which will rapidly increase with the development of North Australia, prominent examples in support of which statements are:—1. That in 1878 she sent ten times as much tea to Melbourne as India and Ceylon put together. 2. That she sent spices of more value than from any quarter, except London. 3. That in sugar her exports to Melbourne were far ahead of any country, except the Mauritius (Ceylon and India not even competing).

So, again, we find that China sent 6,000,000 lbs. of tea direct, and 1,500,000 more *via* Sydney, against 6,000 from India and Ceylon respectively, and that in the wake of the tea have naturally followed other commodities,

such as silk goods, mats, &c., with opium, and the Chinese who eat it. (I may note, in parenthesis, that if the colonies of North Australia would prefer to foreigners from China, British subjects from India, she could send any amount of that excellent coolie labor which has made the fortunes of Demerara and Mauritius planters).

On the other hand, what did China and Java take while the former sent to Victoria more than half a million sterling worth of goods? She only took to the value of £352, and although she was a better customer to New South Wales, yet her only promises of importance were in coal and dried fish, a greatly extended trade in which articles is unlikely; Dutch possessions sending more than a quarter of a million, took less than £20,000 worth. Now, what I wish to insist upon is, that no efforts on the part of Australia are likely to increase the demand for colonial goods in China and Java, whereas they can obtain every assistance in India for the exportation of Australian produce. In this respect, indeed, India may be to Australia a better customer than even England, who can get a great deal that she wants in agricultural and pastoral produce more cheaply from America. I now adduce one of two examples which indicate the necessity of an inquiring agency and administrative action:—1. The jute trade with Calcutta is one of those branches of commerce which seems to the well established; and yet, on showing samples of Indian manufacture in Melbourne, I find, on the authority of one of the largest wholesale importing houses, that certain sections of jute goods are not sent from India at all, and that the Indian samples only require certain simple modifications in width and texture to make them as well suited to the

Australian market as the English imports. Now, it is clear that it only requires a little persistent inquiry to ascertain such facts as these, that it ought only to require communication of them to Indian exporters to induce the export of the required article from Calcutta or Bombay. 2. North India is one of the greatest producers of linseed in the world, and is actually looking for consumers who will buy the oil and leave her the cake, which latter is so greatly needed by her half-starved cattle. What happens now is that England buys the oil seed, keeps the cake, and sends a considerable quantity of expressed oil to Australia. A little persistent action on the part of administrative authorities, extending, if necessary, to the subsidy of a pioneering enterprise in the establishment of oil mills, ought to succeed in sending oil to Australia as cheaply as England. 3. The Bombay weaving and spinning mills are manufacturing large quantities of goods which in many cases are only unsaleable in Australia, because they have not attempted to suit their patterns to Australian requirements. In those few cases where the patterns are right, I have found on the authority of wholesale houses that prices are well within the mark. A little persistent correspondence conducted through a recognised agency ought, therefore, to lead to the supply from Bombay of the patterns required and to an extended trade in them.

Such are examples which could easily be multiplied (of which Mr. O'Connor has a further list) of new openings which may be made for imports from India. There is none immediate difficulty in increasing exports to Australia, but a very large increase can, if the wants of India are watched, be gradually effected, and made to follow the

rapidly rising civilisation and removal of prejudices to foreign articles of consumption which now exist. At present no attempt is made in Australia to study these possible openings. Little appreciation exists here of the great need that the European population and army in India has of good meat and good dairy produce throughout the greater part of the year (when it is too hot for suitable food to be grown for cattle), or of the great extent to which the native population consume fruit; so much so that immense quantities are yearly brought down from the mountainous regions of Afghanistan on camel-back at quite as great (if not greater) a cost as would carry better fruits across the seas from Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Port Darwin or Hobart. There are more than 200,000,000 of fruit-eaters in India. The hop-growers of Victoria and Tasmania were unaware of the establishment of large breweries along the Himalayan ranges for the supply of beer to British troops and residents in India, and that Britain and Germany are now competing for the supply of hops, which there seems reason to believe can be sent of better quality from the colonies.

These examples are, for the present, sufficient to indicate that some agency is undoubtedly required to link together the two strands which, when tied, will form the bond between India and Australia, and that there is an actual necessity that those practical enquiries should (for a limited period) be continued, which we, Exhibition commissioners, can only hope to commence. A vast amount of information as to the character of Australian products has been collected and published, in some cases in a very interesting form, by the representatives

here of Australian colonies, and it is due to them, as well as the promoters of this Exhibition, that their labor should not be in vain. India is, as regards Australasia, cosmopolitan, and wishes to have reciprocal dealings with all the colonies of which Australasia (regarded by her as one empire) is composed; but as it happens that the wants and capabilities of each Australian colony are not identical, it does not appear to me that practical investigation can be confined to Melbourne alone, but that whatever official action may be taken, should be extended to the development of Indo-Australian commerce throughout the whole group of colonies.

Three courses have been suggested:—The appointment of one agent of commercial experience who shall make enquiries on behalf of all British colonies, both north and south of the equator, and who shall keep himself in constant communication with "experts" in every branch of commerce.

2. The appointment of one agent for each colony.

3. The establishment of an Indo-Australian trading company, with branches at the capital of each colony, through which Government might, if necessary, subsidise pioneering enterprise. This was recommended by Mr. Inglis.

Whatever form of action may recommend itself, it must be accompanied by the proviso, that administrative action must be withdrawn as soon as extended commercial relations have been fairly well established, or have been proved to be impossible.

It is quite fair to quote the history of the Calcutta Tea Syndicate as an immediate example of the practical re-

sults of practical action taken by administrative authorities under the guidance of experts. In this case the Government of India, having appealed to the Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, whether some practical action could not be taken, discussion ensued among the commercial men of Calcutta, which led to the formation of a representative syndicate, who nominated a special commissioner for this Exhibition, and obtained the active support of the Indian Government (by subsidies and general co-operation) in this attempt to launch an Indo-Australian tea trade. I believe that Mr. Stibhorpe can tell you that it is already launched and preparing for full sail. Now I wish specially to note that in this instance the mercantile men of Calcutta co-operated with Government in assuming administrative functions, from which (in accordance with the rule upon which I have so much insisted) they intend to withdraw as soon as the trade is thoroughly established.

Does not the success which has in this case attended the administrative action of mercantile men in Calcutta and the Government of India, in taking advantage of the grand opportunity afforded by the Melbourne Government of a huge advertisement in this Exhibition, offer a strong lead in favor of similar action being taken by "experts" in conjunction with Government for the furtherance of other branches of Indo-Australian commerce, business in which will now more easily follow in the wake of an important tea trade than could perhaps have been independently floated?

A few words in conclusion on the subject of communications. I have heard many complaints that high rates of freight tend to prevent extended commercial relations,

and I believe that the complaints are not unfounded; but I am assured, on the other hand, by those who are intimately connected with the shipping trade, that accommodation at reasonable prices can always be obtained if there be a sufficient quantity of goods to be carried. I believe, however, that the question of encouraging extended communication between Sydney, the Straits, Ceylon, and Calcutta *via* the Torres Straits (advocated so strongly by Mr. Inglis) should receive very serious consideration; for if it be true that ships are found for freights, so it is also to some extent true that freights are found for ships: and if North Australia can work up a coal and copper trade with South India, she can easily obtain goods enough to bring back. Copper so largely used by the native population of India is now sent partly as ballast of woodships from Australia *via* Great Britain to India. Would it not be possible for Queensland to send it direct, if the trade with Australia were more generously encouraged by the extending of steam communication from Calcutta to Sydney? These questions, however, I do not wish to place before the present meeting for full discussion, but refer to them only as an indication of the necessity of national inquiry on these subjects. The resolutions which I now desire to propose are—

"1. That this meeting should express its belief that some form of agency is required during a limited period for the further promotion of commercial relations between India and Australia.

"2. That a subsequent meeting should be held, at which the views of the representatives of the colonies concerned, and, if they are willing to give it, of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce, should be brought forward."

Mr. O'Connor (India), mentioned the following as some of the articles in which an enormous trade could be carried on with the colonies:—Carpeting, drugget, coffee, cordage, grain, coir, cotton-piece-goods, hosiery, raw cotton, drugs, Peruvian bark, fibrous material, pepper and all spices, gums, resin, mats, oils, tobacco, and cigars; pickles, preserves, jams, jellies, and various others. He was not so sanguine with respect to the trade with Australia, but he anticipated that a large quantity of goods, such as blankets, woollens, flour, jams and preserves, copper, lead, tin, agricultural machines, candles, soap, and colonial wines, and timber for sleepers, would be purchased by the Indian people.

Mr. Fergusson, (Ceylon) supported the propositions contained in the paper which had been read, and said he attached much importance to the freezing process by which meat and other provisions could be conveyed from Australia to Ceylon, for the consumption not only of the white inhabitants, but also of the black population who were rapidly becoming Christians, and were abandoning their prejudices against meat. In that alone a large trade could be done. For Australian horses there was always a good demand.

Major Clementi (Straits Settlements) thought that the export of Australian meat to India was rather chimerical, as the expense attending it would be too great to allow of its being conducted with any profit. He considered that a general agency should be established for the introduction of Indian commodities into Australia, and if that were done good results might be anticipated.

Mr. George Collins Levey (Victoria) advocated the establishment of a commercial treaty with India under

the Act passed by the Imperial Parliament which allowed the colonies to impose differential duties upon the products of another.

Mr. R. J. Jeffray (Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce) supported the suggestions of Mr. Buck, and promised the hearty co-operation of that institution.

Dr. Agnew (of Tasmania,) mentioned that an exhibit of hams and bacon from that colony had been purchased for Ceylon, at 9d. for the ham, and 8d. for bacon, delivered at the wharf at Launceston, and he had been informed that if the price was not increased, a monthly order would be forthcoming. He mentioned that fact to indicate the trade that might be developed between Australasia and the East.

The resolutions were carried, and votes of thanks to Mr. Buck and Sir Herbert Sandford concluded the proceedings.

EXTENSION OF THE PARCEL POST SYSTEM TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

The introduction into the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand of the parcel-post system, which has worked so well in India and between India and the United Kingdom and some of the Continental States, was attempted in 1877 by the Government of India through the Director-General of the Post Office, but the negotiation was unsuccessful. The subject has been taken up by the Committee, who placed it in full detail

before the Colonial Chambers of Commerce, in the belief that the extension of the system would be attended with much mutual advantage and convenience, and it will be satisfactory if their representation results in securing that object.

From Chamber to all Colonial Chambers.

Calcutta, 29th July 1880.

It has been represented to the Committee of this Chamber that mutual conveniences and advantages would follow the establishment of a system by which parcels could be transmitted from India to Australia and New Zealand, and *vice versa*, through the agency of the Post Office, and that endeavours should be made to secure facilities for the interchange of articles between this country and the Colonies; and I am directed to submit the matter for the consideration of your Chamber.

At present the only means of sending or receiving small packages is by letter post, and the cost is so great as to deter that freer and more general interchange which would no doubt take place were there a less expensive method of transmission; and it has been urged that if easy means were afforded for the interchange of samples of merchandise and articles of trade and domestic use of limited value, much benefit would be gained by the commercial and general communities of both countries.

The Overland Parcel Post between India and the United Kingdom has been greatly developed since its establishment in 1873, and the extension of the system to foreign Europe has been attended with considerable

success; and it is believed that an inter-colonial arrangement, similar to that which exists between India and Great Britain and many of the countries in Europe, would not fail to accomplish results of material advantage.

Endeavours have been made by the Government of India, through the Director-General of the Post Office, to introduce the Parcel Post System into the several administrations in Australia and New Zealand, but the latter do not as yet appear prepared to enter into negotiations for its establishment.

The Committee of this Chamber, while regretting the unsuccessful issue of the Director-General's correspondence, are not without hope that the results desired may be obtained if the representatives of commercial interests in all the Colonies placed themselves in communication with their local authorities on the subject, and urged the adoption of a scheme which has been successful in other directions.

I have just received from the Director-General of the Post Office the accompanying printed Memorandum upon the Indian Parcel Post System, which may be useful to your Chamber in considering the subject of the representation I have now the pleasure to submit.

MEMORANDUM UPON THE INDIAN PARCEL POST SYSTEM.

India (including the territories of Ceylon and the Straits, which were formerly connected with the Indian Administration), is, it is believed, the only British dependency which has developed a regular parcel post system. This system has for many years been in force in the inland

service of the country, and more recently it has been introduced, wherever practicable, in the foreign postal service. In this memorandum a brief description of the system in both aspects (inland and foreign) will be given.

INLAND PARCEL POST.

2. In the inland service parcels were originally conveyed at a postage rate varying in proportion to the distance traversed, but this troublesome system was subsequently abandoned in favour of the more simple plan of fixing the postage rate irrespective of distance: parcels are now conveyed by the inland service to any part of British India under the following rates and conditions:—

For a parcel not exceeding 50 lbs in weight (about 100 lbs) 5 annas (about 100 s.)
For every additional 50 lbs (about 100 s.) 4 annas (about 80 s.)
It is in contemplation to reduce, at an early date, the maximum rate by 4 annas (about 80 s.) for a parcel not exceeding 50 lbs (about 100 s.) in weight.

Maximum weight 50 lbs (about 100 s.)
No parcel may be of a kind which, owing to size, shape, packing or otherwise, cannot be carried without causing inconvenience to the mail service or risk of injury to itself.

3. The figures given in the margin show the development of the inland parcel post. The comparatively rapid extension of the railway system in India of late years has not lessened the use made by the public of the Post Office for the transmission of parcels; for though the railway administrations offer facilities for parcel traffic, the advantages presented by the Post Office in respect of posting,

Year.	Number of inland parcels.
1863-64	296,000
1863-64	556,000
1873-74	665,000
1874-75	752,000
1875-76	810,000
1876-77	930,000
1877-78	969,000
1878-79	998,000
1879-80	1,060,000

delivery, insurance, &c., serve to maintain the preference for transit through the Post Office, in respect of the smaller class of parcels to which the postal system is confined.

4. The Indian Post Office has arrangements with the different railway administrations, under which it secures certain carrying space in each mail train commensurate with the demands for letter and parcel conveyance: this accommodation is paid for in almost all cases.

5. The transit of parcels is generally slower than that of letters, for on railway lines no attempt is made to sort parcels during transit. Parcel-sorting offices have been established at certain convenient points on the railway lines (about 300 or 400 miles distant from each other), where the parcels are taken out of the train to be sorted and sent on by the next train. The object of this arrangement is to save the expense of sorting during transit, as in the case of letters and newspapers. On road lines also the parcels are commonly carried at somewhat less speed, with a view to lessening the expense. A parcel travelling from Calcutta to Peshawar (about 1,500 miles) would lose some three days in transit, as compared with the letter mail.

6. The delivery of parcels is generally arranged so as to interfere as little as possible with the delivery of important letter mails.

7. In 1877 a system was introduced under which the sender of a parcel could declare its value to the Post Office for realization from the addressee: this system is called the "value-payable" system. The Post Office on delivery of a "value-payable" parcel claims from the ad-

dresser the declared value, and subsequently pays over that value to the sender, after deducting from it the Post Office commission. The rate of this commission is at present about 2 per cent. upon the declared value; but it is intended shortly to reduce it to 1 per cent. The "value-payable" system began in December 1877 in a very small way; but it has considerably increased, as will be seen from the following figures:—

Year.	Number of parcels.	Value declared for realization.	Commission.
		Rs.	Rs.
1878-79	7,408	1,32,109	3,942
<i>Approximate equivalent at 1s. 8d. per rupee.</i>	...	£ 11,000	£ 329
1879-80	26,035	3,46,330	11,395
<i>Approximate equivalent at 1s. 8d. per rupee.</i>	...	£ 28,500	£ 950

8. About the same time (i.e., at the beginning of the year 1878) another system was introduced by which the Post Office insured parcels (as well as letters), entrusted to it for transmission by post, against loss in transit. The present scale of insurance fees represents about $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. upon the insured value. The following figures shew the rapid development of the insurance system:—

Year.	Value Exchanged.			Insurance fees.
	Lettres.	Parcels.	Total.	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1878-80 ...	89,71,775	2,81,21,219	3,70,92,994	1,23,558
<i>Approximate equivalent at Rs. 82 per rupee.</i>	7,47,630	2,34,140	3,097,050	10,400
1879-80 ...	1,63,31,008	5,34,34,085	6,97,65,093	1,07,780
<i>Approximate equivalent at Rs. 82 per rupee.</i>	1,351,000	4,422,840	5,832,840	16,440

FOREIGN PARCEL POST.

9. In March 1873 the foreign parcel-post system was introduced in India. At first it was confined to an exchange of parcels between India and the United Kingdom, but subsequently it was extended to parcel-post exchanges with the following countries, *viz.*—

Austria—Hungary.	France.	Straits Settlements.
Belgium.	Germany.	Sweden.
Ceylon.	Holland.	Switzerland.
Denmark.	Norway.	

10. The main revenue from the foreign parcel-post system is derived from the exchange with the United Kingdom. The British Post Office found itself unable to take any part in parcel-post transactions, and arrangements were consequently made with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's Office in London, under which that Company became not only the carriers by sea but also the collecting and delivering agents of the Indian Post Office in the United Kingdom. In the case of other foreign countries, the Post Office of Austria (Trieste) is the medium of exchange with India.

11. The statistics given below, for the period during which the foreign parcel-post has been established, show rapid development:—

Year.	Parcel exchange.	Despatch, Number of parcels.	Receipt, Number of parcels.	Observations.
1873-74 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	8,559 ...	13,334 ...	
1874-75 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	9,643 ...	16,120 ...	
1875-76 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	12,000 643	22,600 481	
1876-77 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	15,159 1,023	27,547 1,036	
1877-78 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	17,164 2,165	35,389 236	
1878-79 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	18,068 2,964	46,369 1,233	
1879-80 ...	United Kingdom ... Foreign Countries ...	19,154 3,192*	48,610 1,456*	* Approximate

12. The average weight of the parcels mentioned in the preceding paragraph is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. on the homeward route, and about $5\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. on the outward route.

13. The postage rate for foreign parcels despatched from India is uniformly 8 annas (about 10d.) per pound (prepayment compulsory); the weight is limited to 50 lbs.; and no parcel may exceed 2 feet in length by 1 foot in breadth or depth, or contain opium, liquids or substances

of a damaging, dangerous, or offensive nature. In the case of parcels addressed to the United Kingdom the value is limited to £50. The value of parcels containing valuables addressed to Ceylon is likewise limited to £50.

14. The rate charged in other countries for the transmission of foreign parcels to India is about 1s. per pound, but book parcels forwarded from the United Kingdom to India are charged half rates only, *i.e.*, 6d. per pound.

15. In all cases a declaration of the value and contents of each parcel has to be furnished by the sender, along with the parcel, for the inspection of the Customs Department of the receiving country: a few parcels are opened by way of test (and securely reclosed under the Custom-house seal), but the great bulk are passed on the declarations received with them. Any Customs duty which may be chargeable is marked on the parcel by the Custom-house authorities (who attend at the Post Office for that purpose) and is levied, together with any postage which may be due, from the addressee on delivery of the parcel.

GENERAL REMARKS.

16. The preceding paragraphs shew that thus far the parcel-post system in India has proved a convenience to the public: and it is hoped that in course of time the system may be extended in connection with other countries. An attempt was made in this direction in 1877, when the Post Offices of the Australasian colonies, Hong-Kong and the Straits Settlements were invited to join in an arrangement with this country for the exchange of parcels, but the negotiations were successful only in the case of the Straits Settlements. One of the main objec-

tions urged by the Australasian colonies was the difficulty of carriage in the interior.

17. The Indian Post Office would gladly avail itself of any opening for the resumption of negotiations for parcel-post exchanges with the Australasian colonies. Fresh negotiations are being commenced with those colonies in respect of Money Order exchanges: and it is possible that the opportunity may yet come for a similar resumption of negotiations for the exchange of parcels.

SIMLA;
The 30th June 1880.

L. G. WAIT,
*Offg. Asst. to the Director-Genl.
of the Post Office of India.*

THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S ACT.

Section 56 of the Administrator-General's Act—II of 1874—prohibits any person other than the Administrator-General from receiving any remuneration for services rendered as executor or administrator under probate or letters of administration, and this provision of the Act was the subject of a memorial addressed to the Governor-General in Council a few months since by firms and others who were affected by it; but His Excellency was unable to comply with the prayer of the petitioners.

At the instance of the Madras Chamber of Commerce, the Committee reconsidered this question, which had engaged attention many years

ago, and, conditional on the movement being a combined one and supported by the Chambers of the three Presidencies, they were prepared to submit a representation to Government, but the Bombay Chamber decided not to co-operate, as the matter did not seem to them to be one in which mercantile interests were involved, and the proposed action of the Committee was accordingly abandoned.

From Madras Chamber to Chamber.

Madras, 7th August 1880.

I am directed by the Chamber to ask you to be so good as to state whether it is the intention of your Chamber to take any, and what, action with regard to the refusal of the Government of India to comply with the prayer of the Calcutta memorial on the subject of Section 56 of the Administrator-General's Act No. II of 1874.

A copy of the letter that was addressed by the Government of India on the 18th May to Messrs Roberts, Morgan & Co., on the subject was communicated to this Chamber, and it is observed with regret that the Governor-General in Council contends that the law prohibits any person, other than the Administrator-General in his official capacity, from receiving any remuneration for doing any thing as executor, or administrator under any probate or letters of administration.

This Chamber continue to think that if a man voluntarily appoints an executor and gives him what he considers a fair remuneration for carrying out the provisions of his

will it is not, or it should not be, competent to any Government to step in and say that such man's wishes shall be set aside, and that the work shall be done by the private executor for nothing, or by the official administrator for a definite charge. It must often happen that the friends of a deceased man have good reason to believe that his estate will be realised more advantageously by private than by official agency, and in such case they would naturally prefer to pay a fair remuneration for the work in order to enlist the services of such private agency. But the Government would seem to hold that it is reasonable that they should exercise the right to say that the friends of the deceased person must either engage that private agency for nothing, or pay an official twice the commission which would be thought sufficiently remunerative by a private administrator for the work. This seems to the Chamber so unreasonable an infringement of private liberty and so inexpedient an attempt to bring business to the official referred to, that the Chamber will be glad to hear that your Chamber contemplate memorialising the Secretary of State for redress.

Calcutta, 10th September 1880.

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th of last month, inquiring if it is the intention of this Chamber to take any action consequent on the refusal of the Viceroy and Governor-General to comply with the prayer of a memorial addressed to His Excellency on the subject of administrations to Indian Estates and specially with reference to the 56th Section of the Administrator-General's Act No. 2 of 1874.

The Committee of this Chamber direct me to say that Messrs. Roberts, Morgan & Co, have been so good as to furnish them with copies of the memorial and reply referred to, and that these documents have come before them for the first time, as they had no previous official knowledge of the movement in question, which appears to have originated with a limited number of persons affected by the prohibitive provisions of the Section appealed against.

The subject of your reference will have the Committee's attention; but I am directed to point out that the most urgent representations were simultaneously made some years ago by the Chambers of the three Presidencies against such provisions of the Act then in force as were calculated to prejudice the interests of estates, and especially the rights of non-official executors and administrators who were barred by statute from receiving any remuneration for their services in those capacities.

The obnoxious clauses were retained nevertheless; and the Administrator-General's Act of 1874 is the survivor of the various repealed Acts since 1849.

On a review of the previous representations of all the Chambers and of the carefully prepared memorial now before them, it appears to the Committee that the subject has been dealt with in the most exhaustive manner; that it would be difficult to employ stronger or more cogent arguments in support of the views submitted for the consideration of Government; and that the recent answer to the memorialists leaves scarcely any room for hope that any renewed appeal will meet with success.

The only ground upon which the Committee think they may take action concurrently with your own Chamber

and that of Bombay is that the memorial proceeded from a comparatively small number of persons interested in a matter which concerns not only themselves but, the community generally, and that a combined movement on the part of all the Chambers may possibly have greater weight and influence.

Viewing it in this light the Committee are therefore of opinion that the co-operation of the Chambers at Madras and Bombay is essential, and if an approval of this course is expressed the Committee will undertake to draw up an appeal for consideration and subsequent submission to the Government, either as a joint or several representation of the three Chambers as may be hereafter decided upon.

Madras, 4th October 1880.

In reply to your letter of the 10th ultimo which I have laid before this Chamber, I am directed to say that this Chamber will be happy to co-operate in a joint representation to the Government of India on the subject of administration of Indian estates, and especially with reference to the 56 section of the Administrator-General's Act of 1874.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 13th September 1880.

The provision of the Administrator-General's Act No. 2 of 1874, section 56, which prohibits private or non-official administrators or executors from charging commission for their services was the subject of a memorial addressed, in July of last year, to the Viceroy and Gover.

nor-General by some agency houses and others interested in the question, but His Excellency was unable to comply with the application to amend the law in that respect.

The Madras Chamber has lately referred the matter to us, inquiring if we are prepared to take any action consequent on the decision arrived at, and I am directed to place before your Chamber copy of that reference and of our answer (hereto attached) as well as of the memorial and the reply, which will reach you under separate cover.

When the draft of an Act to amend the law of 1849 relating to the office and duties of Administrator-General was published in 1853, the Committee of this Chamber submitted a very earnest protest against the injustice of depriving non-official representatives of deceased persons of the right which they had, prior to the Act of 1849, equally with the Ecclesiastical Registrar of the Supreme Court, of charging commission on the assets of estates passing into their hands, and the Bombay and Madras Chambers also addressed the Government in very strong remonstrances against the proposed measure, which was adopted notwithstanding all that had been urged against it.

The memorial under submission is substantially a renewal of the appeal then made; and as its prayer has been so recently rejected the question arises whether any action on the part of the Bombay and Madras and Bengal Chambers should be taken; and the Committee will be glad to be favored with the views of your Chamber on the subject.

Bombay, 4th October 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo on the subject of the provision of the Administrator-General's Act No. 2 of 1874 section 56 which prohibits private or non-official administrators or executors from charging commission for their services, and enquiring whether this Chamber would be willing to co-operate with the Bengal and Madras Chambers in taking any action consequent on the refusal of the Viceroy and Governor-General to amend the law in that respect.

In reply the Committee desire me to state that the question had already been brought before this Chamber and that they decided not to move in it, as the matter did not seem to them to be one in which mercantile interests were involved.

From Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 30th October 1880.

Simultaneously with the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant the Committee of this Chamber were in possession of the reply from the Bombay Chamber, who wrote to say that they decided not to move in the matter of the Administrator-General's Act, as it did not seem to them to be one in which mercantile interests were involved.

This determination on the part of the Bombay Chamber materially modifies the condition upon which my Committee expressed their willingness to make a joint representation to Government; and in the absence of combined action on the part of all the Presidency Chambers

they are of opinion that it is not expedient to address the Government on the subject.

The Committee have come to this conclusion, however, with less reluctance, as they are informed that the original memorialists are making efforts, through their London correspondents, with the view of obtaining from the Secretary of State a reversal of the Resolution arrived at by the Governor-General in Council.

UNIFORM TONNAGE SCALE FOR ALL INDIAN PORTS.

The Committee hesitate to bring this subject forward for the consideration of the Chamber. The existing scale is the result of a compromise after much discussion; and as apparently no inconvenience is experienced by those using it, no good object seemed likely to be gained by amendments. Upon one point only the Committee feel that some alteration is desirable. According to the Chamber's Schedule a ton of jute, cotton, &c. is 50 cubic feet, whereas by general custom and agreement the ton of such cargo is 5 bales not exceeding 52 cubic feet. The Committee think the Schedule should be amended to follow the custom.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 27th August 1880.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to invite the attention of your Chamber to the correspondence which

passed between the two Chambers in February and March last year, on the subject of a uniform tonnage scale for all India, and to ask you if your Committee would now be prepared to join in a movement for the introduction of such a scheme.

The tonnage scale adopted by this Chamber is, as stated in my letter of the 11th February 1879, on the basis of 40 cubic feet and 16 cwt. dead weight to the ton for steamers, and 80 cubic feet and 20 cwt. for ships: at Kurrachee the scale is on a similar basis. The scale, however, at your port is on a different system, as are likewise the scales at Madras, Ceylon, Cochin, and other ports. It is obvious that a uniform scale for all India and Ceylon would carry with it many advantages to shipping interests as well as to shippers.

The Committee of this Chamber were glad to learn that you agreed in considering a uniform scale for all India desirable, and they venture to hope that your Committee may now be prepared to take up the question.

Calcutta, 6th September 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, relative to the introduction of a tonnage scale for all India, and enquiring if the Committee of this Chamber are now prepared to join in a movement for the introduction of such a scheme.

You point out that the scale at the ports of Bombay and Kurrachee is on the basis of 40 cubic feet and 16 cwt. dead weight to the ton for steamers, and 50 feet and 20 cwt. for ships, but that at Calcutta, Madras, Ceylon, Cochin and other ports the system is different, and that it

would be advantageous to the interests of shipping and of shippers if a uniform scale for all India and Ceylon were adopted.

In replying to your favor of the 11th February of last year, in which you represented the desirability of uniformity of practice at all Indian ports, the Committee of this Chamber, while agreeing with yours in this respect, regretted their inability to re-open a question which had been recently settled; and their subsequent experience of the working of the system as it prevails here does not encourage them to disturb it.

They admit the unscientific character of the Calcutta schedule, and that advantages may probably result from an assimilation of the scales in force in all ports; but, notwithstanding its acknowledged imperfection, the system is so well understood by shippers and the shipping visiting this port, that no inconvenience has been experienced or complained of, nor do the Committee apprehend any from its continuance.

The Committee, therefore, do not find themselves in a position to respond, as you would desire, to the invitation you have been good enough to offer.

EXCESSIVE ASSESSMENT OF PRESSING COMPANIES FOR LICENSE TAX.

The very heavy and unequal incidence of the License tax on the Pressing Companies in this city and neighbourhood, sought to be enforced by the Calcutta and Suburban Municipalities, was brought under the Committee's notice, and

the undernoted representation to the Government of Bengal was put forward in support of the petition of the agents and secretaries of these Companies. Although no decision has been announced it is understood that an equitable adjustment is intended to be made, and that the inequalities complained of in the assessments will be removed.

From Chamber to Private Secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

Calcutta, 14th June 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward the enclosed petition addressed to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor by various Agents and Secretaries of Pressing Companies relative to the excessive assessment for license-tax levied by the Calcutta and suburban municipalities.

The case is so fully detailed in the petition that the Committee can do little more than express the hope that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will give the matter the consideration it deserves, in order that the present unequal incidence of the tax be removed, and that, in future, the fee be assessed on a sounder basis, such as is laid down in the Act of 1879 referred to.

Copy.

To

THE HON'BLE SIR ASHLEY EDEN, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

The Petition of the Press Companies of Calcutta
 and its Suburbs.

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners have from time to time, between the years 1870-74, erected in and around Calcutta, presses worked by steam and hydraulic power, and have since carried on the business of pressing into bales jute, cotton, and other articles.

2. That until the year 1879 your Petitioners were assessed by the Calcutta and Suburban Municipalities in the uniform sum of Rupees 1,000—one thousand—per annum which they paid for the license to carry on such business; and that in the year 1879 the said Municipalities refunded to your Petitioners half of the sums so assessed for the year 1878-79.

3. That your Petitioners have recently received a demand from the said Municipality to pay the following sums:—

Chitpore Hydraulic Press Company	...	Rs. 1,500
Calcutta Hydraulic Press Company	...	" 1,600
River side Press Company	...	" 2,000
Gohabarry Press Company	...	" 2,000
Nasmyth's Patent Press Company	...	" 1,700
The Strand Bank Press Company	...	" 2,000
Watson's Patent Press Company	...	" 800

which they have actually paid as License fees for the year 1879-80 under Clause 5 of Act V. of 1879 Bengal

Council. On receipt of the above demand your Petitioners separately waited on the Vice-Chairmen of the said Municipalities to represent that they had been assessed at an excessive rate and to appeal against the same, when they were informed that the assessments were made under orders of the Government of Bengal basis of a 10 per cent. rate on the value of the premises as assessed for house rate, and that there was no appeal.

4. That your Petitioners now lay their case before your Honor with a view to a re-consideration of the said basis of assessment.

5. That the 2nd Clause of Act V. 1879, B.C. says:—
 "In fixing the amount of fee to be paid in respect of
 "any Jute Warehouse, the Local Government shall have
 "regard to the annual value thereof as it is for the time
 "assessed, to the payment of Municipal taxes, to the
 "size and position of the Jute Warehouse, to the number
 "and excellence of the pressing machines, erected or
 "proposed to be erected in such Jute Warehouse, and the
 "probable income derived from such Jute Warehouse
 "by its owner or occupier."

6. That your Petitioners respectfully submit that it is wrong in principle and contrary to the terms of the above clause of the Act, to select as the basis of assessment only one of the several considerations detailed above for the purpose of determining the amount of the License fee to be paid by each Press House, and that such method of assessment leads to great inconsistencies and inequalities in the incidence of this tax which the following table will show:—

	Capital.	No. of Presses.	Bales pressed in India for July-Decr. 1879, 1880	Dividend declared per 5 year	License Fee.
	Rs.				
Chitrota Hydraulic Press Company.	4,00,000	4	83,000	11%	1,500
Calcutta Hydraulic Press Company.	1,75,000	4	54,576	22%	1,000
Riverside Press Company.	276,000	4	74,323	10%	2,000
Nasmith's Patent Press Company.	3,10,000	7	75,317	7½%	3,740
The Strand Bank Press Company.	2,00,000	4	77,000	16%	2,000
Wheeler's Patent Press Company.	3,00,000	4	55,000	14%	800
Golabarry Press Company.	255,000	5	77,000	2%	2,000

7. That your Petitioners respectfully suggest that a more equitable basis for assessment as contemplated by the Act be adopted, that the excessive sum fixed for their license be reduced to a fair amount, and that the difference be ordered to be refunded.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray.

- (Sd.) KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co., *Managing Agents,*
Chitpore Hydraulic Press Company, Ltd.
 " ROBERT & CHARNOY, *Managing Agents, Cal-*
cutta Hydraulic Press Company, Ltd.
 " RUTHERFORD & Co., *Agents, Riverside Press*
Company, Limited.
 " RUSKIN BROTHERS, *Secretaries, Nasmith's*
Patent Press Company, Limited.
 " ERNSTHAUSEN & OESTERLEY, *Managing Agents*
and Secretaries, the Strand Bank Press
Company, Limited.
 " FINLAY, MUIR & Co., *Agents, Golabarry Press.*
 " CALCUTTA, }
 7th June 1880.

From Private Secretary to Chamber.

Darjeeling, 17th June 1880.

I am directed to inform you that the petition from the Agents and Secretaries of Pressing Companies forwarded with your letter of the 14th instant, has, by order of the Lieutenant-Governor, been transferred to the Bengal Office. You should apply to the Secretary to Government in the Financial Department for information as to the orders passed on the petition.

EXTENSION OF JAIL MANUFACTURES.

It was represented to the Committee that there seemed to be a tendency on the part of the Government of Bengal to increase in the Presidency jails the manufacture by machinery of certain articles which had hitherto been supplied almost entirely by free labour, and that this if persevered in would tell seriously on many local industries. The reply is satisfactory, as shewing that the Lieutenant-Governor has no intention of permitting the employment of convict labour to such an extent as to interfere with private manufacturers.

*From Chamber to Government of Bengal.
Calcutta, 2nd August 1880.*

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to lay before you a complaint which has been addressed to them on the subject of the extension of Jail manufactures.

The Committee feel the question to be one of some difficulty; it cannot be denied that it is the duty of Government to lessen, as far as it legitimately can, the cost of the maintenance of prisoners in the various jails, but at the same time the Committee would respectfully submit that the interference with free labor should be as small as possible.

If this be not kept carefully in view the result may be that many struggling industries may be threatened or even extinguished by the forced labor (working new machinery under skilled supervision) which Government command.

The Committee observe that the policy adopted by the Government of Bengal in 1874 is being more energetically carried on by the present Lieutenant-Governor, and the Administration Report for the current year records—"that Woollen Factory buildings in the Bhangaulpore Central Jail are nearly ready, and the machinery, which arrived in India in December, is now being erected. A Castor Oil Factory, on a large scale, has been established at Rajshahye, and the Jail has for some months been actively engaged in making oil for the Northern Bengal State Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway. The manufacture of coir goods is now the

"only industry in the Midnapore Jail. The question of the kind of machinery to be purchased for the Cotton Factory at Buxar is still under consideration, and it is proposed to start a Paper Factory at Hazaribagh."

This active trade on the part of the Jail authorities, it is feared, is likely to exceed the limit of what is justifiable; and it is hoped that the Government will reconsider the position the Jail authorities are taking in this matter, and give such assurances as will restore the confidence of private manufacturers.

*From Government of Bengal to Chamber,—
No. 1652 T. Darjeeling, the 1st October 1880.*

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 2nd August last, submitting a representation from the Chamber of Commerce regarding the extension of Jail manufactures in Bengal.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to find that the Chamber shares with him the view that it is the duty of Government to lessen, as far as it legitimately can, the burden which the maintenance of the convict population throws on the tax-payers of the province. The object of Government in introducing machinery into some of the Central Jails in Lower Bengal has been to enable it, whilst enforcing stricter penal labor, to utilize the labor of the convicts to the best advantage in manufacturing articles required for the public service, and especially by the convicts themselves, such as clothing, blankets, &c.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor is not aware of any industry now carried on at any Central Jail which is

open to the objection taken in the concluding portion of the 2nd para. of your letter under acknowledgment.

MOYAPORE POWDER MACAZINE.

It appeared to the Committee that the proposal of the Port Commissioners in reference to the charge of Rs. 5 for boat hire on every vessel coming to the Port in order to meet the cost of maintaining the magazine, was an endeavour to indirectly increase the dues on vessels trading here. As it is, Calcutta is by far the most expensive of all Indian Ports, and in the Committee's opinion it is already unnecessarily costly. Experience elsewhere has shown the false policy of burdening with charges on shipping any Port however great its natural or added facilities : and considering what is passing at other Indian Ports, but particularly at Bombay, the Committee hold that every proposal in the direction of additional charges should be scrutinised with the utmost jealousy. The Committee are glad to notice that the Lieutenant-Governor agreed with them in thinking that there was no sufficient ground for the levy of this fee.

Regarding the increased charges for storing and delivering powder, the Committee have no doubt that the Lieutenant-Governor has

satisfied himself that the increase is necessary to cover actual charges. At the same time they cannot but regret that the increase has been sanctioned without a corresponding reduction elsewhere being insisted upon. The revenue of the Port, taken as a whole, is far in excess of what is necessary to cover all possible expenditure. Indeed the Commissioners' report for the past year shows that, after providing for all contingencies, as well as for a sinking fund, calculated to extinguish within 30 years the cost of all works to date, a surplus of nearly 5 lakhs of rupees remained. This large sum has been spent upon new works and improvements, but the Committee, as they have already upon more than one occasion stated, consider that it should rather have been devoted to a reduction of current charges on trade. They strongly object to the present business of the Port being made to provide the capital required for works which are to benefit future generations.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—

No. 72. Calcutta the 20th May 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a note by the Vice-Chairman to the Port Commissioners, Calcutta, together with a Resolution passed at a Meeting of the Commissioners, held on the 25th March 1880, on the subject of

increasing the fees levied at the Moyapore Magazine, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with any remarks which the Chamber of Commerce may desire to offer on the proposals of the Port Commissioners.

The return of the papers forwarded herewith is requested with your reply.

Read following note by the Vice-Chairman on the receipts and expenditure of the Moyapore Magazine and suggesting an increased scale of fees on powder stored in the magazine:—

NOTE.

The receipts and expenditure on account of the Moyapore Magazine, as stated in the estimates for 1850-51, attracted the attention of the Budget Committee, and at their request I have to submit the following remarks for the information of the Commissioners.

The receipts for the past three years have been—

				Rs.
1876-77	...	...	...	5,850
1877-78	...	...	...	8,668
1878-79	...	...	...	5,044

For the current year the receipts will probably be about Rs. 3,500 only.

The expenditure on account of the Magazine has been as follows:—

Years.	Repairs.	Salaries.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1876-77	...	544	3,968
1877-78	...	356	4,056
1878-79	...	1,655	4,224
			5,879

For 1879-80 the expenditure will probably be about Rs. 5,000.

The average income of the past four years may therefore be taken at Rs. 5,818, and the average expenditure at Rs. 4,948. To the expenditure on account of salaries and repairs should also be added interest at 4 per cent. on Rs. 73,449, the amount at which the magazine premises stand in the valuation of property made over to the Port Commissioners in 1871. With this charge added the total annual expenditure on account of the magazine amounts to Rs. 8,208, against a revenue of Rs. 5,818.

Up to 1871 the only charges levied at the magazine were those payable on delivery of the consignments, the rates being as follows:—

		Rs.	A.	P.
On sporting powder	0	0
On blasting powder	0	0

To these delivery fees the Commissioners in 1871, with the approval of Government, added the following godown charges:—

		Rs.	A.	P.
Magazine charge for godown rent on all packages of 25lb. and under per month or portion of month	0	1
Magazine charges for godown rent on all packages over 25lb. and not exceeding 50lb.	0	2
Magazine charges for godown rent on packages over 50lb.	0	4

These fees and godown rent charges are the only income of the magazine, and they amount to considerably less than the expenditure as has been shown above.

The expenditure was considerably increased soon after the Commissioners took charge of the port, in consequence of their providing powder-boats for the use of vessels passing the magazine. Up to 1872-73 vessels were allowed to keep 50lb. of powder on board while in port; and the fact that a ship which was on fire, and was afterwards sunk, was known to have had this quantity on board led the Commissioners to propose that all powder in

excess of this should be left at Moyapore; and to make the delay and inconvenience to vessels in putting out and taking on board their powder as little as possible, the Commissioners provided two station powder-boats, one of which is always manned and ready to wait on passing vessels. The addition to the expenditure was Rs. 1,436 in salaries alone, besides interest, repairs, and stores. It was, however, resolved at the time that no additional charge should be made to the shipping on account of these boats.

To supplement the present income, it is now suggested that the following increased scale of fees be submitted for the approval of Government:—

Rs. A. P.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Delivery order, spotting powder and ammunition, per lb. | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| 2. Delivery order, blasting powder or other explosive material | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| 3. Godown rent on all cases of powder and ammunition at the rate of one pie per lb. per mensem (just double present rate). | | | |
| 4. Boat fee for all vessels entering port payable for use of station-boat | 5 | 0 | 0 |

This last charge is a new one altogether; but as the boats have been placed there for the convenience of passing vessels, and to save the delay and trouble which would be experienced if the masters had to use their own boats to take powder to or from the shore, a small fee of Rs. 5 for each voyage would not press unfairly.

If these rates are approved, the following is an approximate estimate of receipts based on the actuals of 1879-80.

The actual receipts for 1878-79 were as follow:—

	Rs.
Delivery fees	3,009
Godown rent	1,478

The number of vessels that entered port was 967.

In the following estimate the godown rent has been doubled, and the receipts from vessels estimated at Rs. 5 each from 950 vessels.

ESTIMATE FOR 1880-81.

Moyapore Magazine.

Receipts—		Rs.
From delivery fees .....	...	3,000
" godown rent .....	...	3,000
" boat-fee against vessels .....	...	4,750
Total		10,750

Expenditure—		Rs.
Salaries .....	...	4,500
Interest .....	...	3,260
Repairs .....	...	850
Depreciation of boats .....	...	400
Stores, &c. ....	...	50
Total		9,260

W. D. BAKER
Vice-Chairman.

Resolved.—That the revised scale of fees suggested in the foregoing note be approved and submitted for the approval of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor under the provisions of section 61 of Act XII. of 1875.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 5th June 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 72 of the 20th ultimo, forwarding a memorandum by the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners regarding the receipts and expenditure on account of the Powder

Magazine at Morapore, and a Resolution thereon by the Commissioners approving of the revised scale of fees and submitting it for the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor.

The memorandum sets forth that the fees hitherto levied do not meet the expenditure (which has been largely added to by including in the accounts a charge for interest on the amount at which the Magazine premises were taken over by the Commissioners), and with a view to remedy this it is proposed :—

(1) To increase the scale of delivery fees; (2) to double the godown rent on powder stored; and (3) to levy a fee of Rs. 5 on every vessel entering the port for the use of the boats provided for landing and re-shipping the powder.

The Committee instruct me to say that they see no objection to an increase in the charge for delivery fees, nor for extra rent on powder stored, provided such increase is really called for to meet the actual charges for its preservation and re-issue, but they do object to an extra fee upon all the vessels which enter this port, whether they use the Magazine or not, in order to cover an interest charge upon the estimated value of buildings which are part and parcel of the Port Estate. Such a charge would, they consider, be tantamount to an enhancement of the port dues.

It appears to the Committee that the Port Commissioners are able to justify their proposal for increased fees chiefly by including this interest charge in their account of the expenses of the Magazine; but seeing that when the Port was made over to the Commissioners the charges which they were permitted to make were cal-

culated to be ample to meet the interest upon the value of the *whole* block surrendered to them by Government, as well as to provide for its efficient maintenance and for a sinking fund, and seeing also that the general current revenue of the Port has since not only done this but has enabled the Commissioners to execute large works of Port improvement (many of them of a nature which, in the Committee's opinion, should have entitled their being charged to Capital rather than to Revenue), they consider that the Port Commissioners cannot fairly claim to raise their charges in any particular Department whilst the aggregate of all the Port revenues are so ample if not excessive.

P.S.—The annexure to your letter is returned herewith as requested.

VALUATIONS OF STEEL FOR DUTY.

The tariff values of various kinds of imported steel having been found to be considerably in excess of actual market prices, the attention of Government has been drawn to the expediency of all descriptions of this metal being assessed for duty "*ad valorem*."

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 30th August 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to represent that in addition to the classifications of steel which are liable to 5 per cent. duty on the tariff

values fixed by Notification No. 71C of 6th March 1880, there are several kinds imported of qualities somewhat better than common English steel, and which are described by manufacturers under various special names, such as *tool steel* and *Bessemer steel*, the present market values of which vary from 8 to 11 rupees per cwt.

A consignment of one of these qualities has lately been treated as cast steel by the Collector of Customs, who insisted on payment of duty on the tariff value of that quality, viz., Rs 21 per cwt, and, on appeal by the importer to the Board of Revenue, the Collector's decision has been confirmed.

Another similar description has, on several occasions, been treated as cast steel in the Custom House, although its value was only Rs. 9 per cwt.; but recently on a survey being held, the Collector has allowed an identical lot to be admitted under the lower rate for ordinary British steel, viz., Rs. 7-8 per cwt.

Considering the varieties of steel imported into this market, and the variations of market values, and that it is expedient to protect not only the Customs revenue but the interests of merchants who contribute to it, the Committee submit that the present classification should be removed from the tariff, and duty levied "ad valorem," as the fairest and simplest means of adequately guarding the interests of all concerned.

INTER-COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

Dominion Board of Trade.

Montreal, Canada, 24th May 1880.

Referring to the annexed circular letter, which is a copy of one addressed to you in November 1878, the Executive Council of this Board have now to advise the progress they made towards the formation of the proposed Convention.

On the 19th day of March last, under the auspices of the *Association of Chambers of Commerce of Great Britain*, a meeting was held, attended by the Council of that Association, and by several representatives of Colonial interests, when the following Resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"That the proposed Conference be convened by the Dominion Board of Trade, and be held in London in the last week of February 1881."

It was suggested that invitations should be issued as follows:—

GREAT BRITAIN.		COLONIES.	
	DELEGATES.		DELEGATES.
Association of Chambers of Commerce...	25	Dominion Board of Trade	10
City of London	8	Queensland	2
Manchester Chamber of Commerce	2	Newfoundland	2
Liverpool	2	Adelaide	3
Glasgow	2	Victoria	3
Chamber of Shipping	3	New South Wales	3
Chambers of Agriculture	6	Cape Town	2
	48	Port Elizabeth	2
	—	Stet	2
	—	West India Islands	6
	—	New Zealand	4
	—	Tasmania	2
	—	Singapore	2
	—	Ceylon	3
	—	Calcutta	3
	—	Bombay	3
	—	Madras	3
	—		55

It was understood that preliminary to the Meeting the Dominion Board of Trade should send out propositions to each body invited, stating the objects which they wished the Conference to accomplish, and also inviting resolutions from them to be discussed at the Conference.

The leading object to be obtained by the Conference is the establishment, by fiscal regulations, of reciprocal trade advantages between the mother-country and the different colonies of the Empire, and between those colonies themselves.

With this view it is most desirable that the fullest information relating to the trade of the different colonies should be given; and to that end I am directed to request that you will furnish me, at the earliest moment, with statistics of your trade, stating the available surplus for exportation of your different productions, and of your imports and exports from and to Great Britain and any of the colonies and foreign countries.

We cannot but recognize that the bond between the several dependencies of the British Empire and Great Britain would be greatly strengthened if we could secure the establishment throughout the Empire of reciprocal inter-British trade, with a provision extending to foreign countries the same privileges, upon their agreeing to grant similar reciprocal rights to the Empire.

You are cordially invited, in accordance with the arrangement referred to, to send three delegates to the proposed Conference from your Chamber of Commerce, or such organisation as represents your commercial interests.

I sincerely trust that you will, at your earliest convenience, inform us if you acquiesce in the arrangements

herein indicated, and furnish me with a copy of any resolutions or propositions which you wish to have discussed, along with the names of the gentlemen appointed by you to attend the Conference.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

You obedient servant,

WM. J. PATTERSON,

Secretary.

Calcutta, 25th August 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th of May, relative to a conference proposed to be held in London early next year, with the object of drawing closer the trade relations between the colonies and dependencies of the British Empire, and to which you have been so good as to invite the attendance of three Delegates from this Chamber to represent the commercial interests of the port of Calcutta.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to thank you for the opportunity thus afforded of being associated in a movement of so much importance, but they much regret they are not at present prepared to appoint any gentlemen to avail themselves of your invitation, as the movements of their commercial friends are uncertain and their nominees may not have it in their power to attend the Conference.

With regard, however, to the statistics of the trade of this city, the Committee very gladly place at your disposal the latest returns published by the Government, and by their instructions the following documents have been for-

warded to their Agents in London for transmission to the Dominion Board of Trade:—

- 1 & 2. Annual Statements of the trade and navigation of British India for the year ending 31st March 1879.
3. Review of the Trade of British India for the same period.

4. Annual Statement of the sea-borne trade and navigation of the Bengal Presidency for the same period.

The first three publications will, it is believed, afford the fullest information you can desire on every point in connection with the general trade of this country, and the Review amply illustrates the growth or decline of any branch of our commerce. The last statement embraces the sea-borne trade of this Presidency, and the introductory remarks will place you fully in possession of the principal points relating to the operations of this port and its coasting traffic.

The Committee regret their inability to state the available surplus for exportation of the various productions of this province, it being almost impossible to arrive at any estimate of the stocks held by native merchants in the numerous markets in the interior of the country.

There can be no doubt, however, that considerable stocks are retained, for whenever an abnormal demand arises, and highly remunerative prices can be secured, there is an immediate response, without any apparent exhaustion of the ordinary trade supplies.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF WOOLS AND WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES FOR 1881.

Crystal Palace, Sydenham.

August 10th, 1880.

I have the honour to inform you that the Directors of the Crystal Palace Company intend to hold an International Exhibition next year of Wool and Woollen Manufactures and their allied industries, of which details are forwarded herewith, and they will feel obliged if you will cause this fact to be made known to the members of your Chamber, and the public interested.

I am, &c.,

P. L. SIMMONDS,
*Superintendent of the International
Exhibition Department.*

EXHIBITION FOR 1881.

WOOLS, WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES, AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES.

(Commencing in JUNE and ending in OCTOBER.)

No charge will be made to Exhibitors for space.

Medals and Certificates of Merit will be awarded by competent Jurors to be appointed.

The Directors will furnish Motive-Power for working Machinery free: but any driving-belts, connections, or attachments required must be made at the expense of the Exhibitors.

All applications from intending Exhibitors must furnish full particulars of the space required, and the objects in-

tended to be shown, and be sent in to the Superintendent before the 1st January 1881. After careful consideration and revision by the Directors of the demands received, due notice will be given to the applicants whether any and what space can be granted them.

Goods intended for exhibition must be delivered with freight and all charges paid, by a date to be hereafter fixed. The cases must be addressed to the Superintendent, International Exhibition Department, Crystal Palace, bearing some mark or number, and accompanied with a detailed invoice of the contents. The cases will then be handed over to the duly authorised Agent of the Exhibitor to open and arrange.

Due notice of the appointment of an Agent by an Exhibitor must be forwarded to the Superintendent for approval and sanction by the 1st April 1881. If he is required to attend at the Stand daily, a free pass into the Palace will be granted him for the term of the Exhibition, subject to the approval of the Directors, who, however, reserve the power to withdraw the pass whenever they may consider it desirable.

In the case of Exhibitors who may not think it necessary to appoint an Agent or Attendant, the Superintendent will, on due request made by the 10th of the month of April, employ some official to give information, who will instal and arrange the goods at the Exhibitor's charge.

Endeavours will be made to obtain for Exhibitors favourable terms for freight by railroad and steamboat.

All Show-Cases, Stands, Shelves, and other Fittings must be erected at the charge of the Exhibitor, and sub

ject to the approval of the Superintendent. All objects shown must be numbered and properly labelled, and described with the Maker's or Exhibitor's name, address, and, if possible, the price at which similar articles will be sold.

The Directors of the Crystal Palace Company will not on any account be responsible for loss or damage, from whatever cause arising, to Cases, Fittings, or any Articles exhibited. Exhibitors can effect Insurance on their own account.

Exhibitors must furnish the necessary information for the official catalogue before the 1st March 1881. Those desirous of advertising in the catalogue must make their application to the Superintendent by the 1st of May 1881, for the necessary arrangements to be made for such insertion, and for the amount of payment thereof.

Exhibitors must conform to all rules laid down by the Directors.

A detailed programme of the various classes of goods admissible can be obtained on application to the undersigned.

P. L. SHERMONS,
*Superintendent of the International Exhibition Dept.,
Crystal Palace, Sydenham.*

THE Great International Exhibitions, which commenced in the United Kingdom in 1851, have in the course of time grown too large and expensive to be carried out in their entirety without considerable loss, and there appears to be no present prospect of their being resumed in England on the general extended scale.

The Crystal Palace being the offspring of the first great British International Exhibition, the Directors are desirous, as far as possible, of carrying out the original intentions and objects contemplated, namely, of affording Manufacturers and the Public, Home and Foreign, the opportunity of noting the progress which has been made in different countries in the arts, manufactures, and various industries, by the application of science and invention.

Having space at command, motive-power for machinery, two millions of visitors annually, and organised staffs, and a close connection with the chief industrial artistic and scientific societies, with many other advantages possessed nowhere else; and ten years having elapsed since the last official Annual Exhibitions were commenced, the Directors have arranged to hold a series of special International Exhibitions of different classes of manufactures. They will commence in 1881, with an International Exhibition of Wool and its varied applications and manufactures, with those of a few allied products, and of the machinery and implements relating thereto.

The demand for Wool has increased with marvellous rapidity, and this raw material is produced more or less largely in all countries. But it is to the Australian and African Colonies that Europe is now mainly indebted for its supplies of superior Merino Wool. Of the 411,000,000 lbs. of Wool imported into this country in 1879, nearly 355,000,000 lbs. came from the British Possessions.

The Woollen Manufacture now ranks second in importance of the British textile industries, Wool being much preferred to any other material for nearly all clothing purposes. Although London is the centre of supply of

Wool to the Continent, and buyers are attracted here in large numbers, yet an interchange of manufactured products takes place even between competing countries. Buyers who come over to London to attend the periodical Wool sales have little opportunity of examining, in the confusion and competition of the sale-rooms, the characters and qualities of the raw Wools exposed, or of ascertaining the names of the Wool-growers.

A more leisurely and advantageous opportunity will be afforded to Purchasers and Manufacturers, in the proposed Exhibition, to examine all classes of Wools and Hair, and the fabrics made with them, and to obtain details of progress, improvements, prices, machinery, &c.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.

I.—SHEEP'S WOOL.	Prepared Wools and Manufactures.—
Raw Wools.—	Woolen Yarn.
Fleeced Wool.	Worsted Yarn.
Skin Wool.	Gangape Yarn.
Lanolin Wool.	Fingering Yarns for Knitting and Embroidery.
Fine Merino.	WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES,
Combing Wool.	BROAD CLOTHS, COATINGS
Clothing Wool.	DUFFELS, ETC. PLAIN, ALL
Lustré Wool.	WOOL OR MIXED WITH OTHER
Demi-Lustré.	MATERIALS.
Down and Half-bred.	Army Cloths.
Extract Wool.	Doekins.
Woollen Rags for Shoddy	Cassimeres.
and Mungo.	Satarae.
Woollen Flocks for Paper-	Venetians.
hangings.	Meltons.
Dressed Sheep and Lamb	Beavers.
Skins.	Deerskins.
Coats and Caps made of	
them.	

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—(Continued.)

Diagonals.
 Pilots.
 Reversibles.
 Devens.
 Spanish Stripes.
 Fancy Coatings.
 Victoria Twills.
 NARROW CLOTHS, COATINGS,
 DOTTED, ETC., OF WOOL, OR
 MIXED WITH OTHER MATERIALS.
Twisting.—
 Bedford Cords.
 Kerseymeres.
 Elastics.
 Sealskins.
 Astracans.
 Dogskins.
 Chinchillas.
 Fohians.
 Shoddy and Mungo Fabrics.
 Fries.
 Tweeds.
 Tartans.
 Horse Rugs.
 Saddle Cloths.
 Carriage Cloths.
 Fancy Rugs and Mauds.
 Blankets and Blanketing.
 Billiard Cloths.
 Hairs and Serge.
 Table Covers.
 Coverlets, Railway Rugs, and
 Wraps.
 Felt of Wool or Hair for
 Rollers, Hats, Gloves,
 Shoes, etc.

Carpets.—
 Tapestry, Velvet Pile, or
 Axminster.
 Brussels and Wilton.
 Kidderminster, Scotch, or
 Common.
 Felt or Drugget.
 Persian.
 Turkish.
 African or Moroccan.
 Indian.
 Silesian.
Worsted Fabrics, all Wool.—
 Satteens.
 Reps.
 Cords.
 Serges.
 Mohairs.
 Moseens.
 Coatings.
 Plain blacks.
 Merinos and Sars.
 Panamattas.
 Camlets.
 Bunting for Flags.
 Albert Cords.
 Persian Cords.
 Chene Poplins.
 Alpaca Cloths.
 Furniture Stuffs and Uphol-
 stery Fabrics.
 Plushes and Velvets.
 Tapestry Curtains.
 Berlin Wool Work.
 Embroidery.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—(Continued.)

Fringes, and Trimmings of
 Wool or mixed Materials.
 Gilt-embroidered Cloaks and
 Table Covers.
 WORSTED STUFFS MIXED WORST-
 ED WITH COTTON WARES OR
 OTHER MATERIALS.
 Clapes.
 Colunges.
 Bagege.
 Damasks, Figured or Fancy.
 Taffetas.
 Veloutins.
 Bombazines.
 Paramattas.
 Tammies.
 Summer Cloth.
 Delaines.
 Lastings.
 Canton Cloths.
 Orleans Cloths.
 Cheuses.
 Challies.
 Lecons.
 Checked Poplins.
 Fancy Tweeds.
 Gambroons.
 Irish Poplins.
Shawls.—
 Shelland.
 Astorian.
 Belgian.
 French.
 Cashmere, long and square.
 Union Cloths.
 Hosiery and Small Wares.

II.—GOATS' WOOL OR
 MOHAIR.
Raw Wools.—
 Angora, or Mohair.
 Cashmere.
 Koork.
 Pashum, or Shawl Wool of
 the Thibet Goat.
 Common Goats' Wool.
 Goats' Skins with the Wool on.
Fabrics and Manufactures.—
 Dress Fabrics.
 Brilliantines.
 Utrecht Velvet.
 Mohair Mixed Fabrics.
 Mohair Lace and Braids.
 Goats' Hair Cloth.
 Rugs.
 Sacks.
 Forensic Wigs.
 III.—ALPACA, LLAMA, AND
 VICUNA.
 Raw Wool of various colors.
 Yarn and Fabrics of Alpaca,
 etc.
 IV.—CAMELS' HAIR.
 Raw Wool of different
 colors.
 Shawl Wool.
 Shawls.
 Carpets.
 Tent Cloth.
 V.—COW HAIR.
 Ropes, Sacks, Blankets, Car-
 pets, Felt, and other Fa-
 brics made of it.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS

ADMISSIBLE.—(Continued.)

- Yak Wool or Hair, Moose Hair, and other Hair.
 VI.—HORSE HAIR FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.
 Drawn Hair.
 Fabrics made of it.
 Horse-Hair seating of different colours.
 " Bags.
 " Gloves and Fish.
 Rubbers.
 " Wigs.
 Brushes, Sieves.
 VII.—HUMAN HAIR.
 Various applications of it for twists and strong rope.
 Hair Work and Fancy Ornaments.
 Braids, Wigs, and other Coverings for the Head.
 VIII.—CONY or RABBITS' Wool.
 Yarn and Fabric made of these Wools.
 Hare Wool.
 Economic applications as Hats and Felted Fabrics, Hare-Skin Chest Protectors, Caps and Clothing.
 IX.—SKINS OF FUR-BEARING ANIMALS, ROUGH AND PREPARED.
 Bear Skins and articles made of them.
 Buffalo Robes.
 Fur-Seal Skins dressed and undressed.

- Beaver Skins.
 Otter and Sea Otters.
 Sable and Ermine.
 Marten and Mink.
 Fox and Mole Rat Skins.
 Chinchilla, Squirrel, and other minor Fur-bearing Animals.
 Fur Gloves.
 " Cloaks.
 " Muffs and Boss.
 " Hats.
 Carriage Furs.
 Skin Mats.
 X.—BIRDS' SKINS AND FEATHERS FOR CLOTHING, ORNAMENTS, ORBES, ICS.

- Raw Materials.*—
 Swan Skin.
 Goose Skin.
 Penguin Skin.
 Grebe.
 Ostrich Feathers.
 Paddy Feathers.
 Marabou Feathers.
 Vulture (Rhea) Feathers.
 Peacock Feathers.
 Egret Plumage.
 Birds of Paradise.
 Humming Birds.
 Other bright plumed Birds.
Prepared Applications.—
 Feather Muffs.
 " Trimmings for Dresses.
 " Jewellery.
 " Fans and Flybanners.
 " Mats and Rugs.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—(Continued.)

- Feather Phones.
 " Flowers and Ornaments.
 Swansdown Puffs.
 Elderdown Quills.
 Other economic Applications of Feathers.
 XI.—DRAWINGS, PAINTINGS, PRINTS, AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WOOL AND FUR-BEARING ANIMALS AND BIRDS YIELDING USEFUL FEATHERS.
 XII.—MACHINE IMPLEMENTS, AND TOOLS USED IN WOOLLEN AND WOOLLEN MANUFACTURE, WHETHER WORKED BY HAND OR BY POWER.
 Bleaching and Dyeing Materials.
 Descriptive Published Works, AND STATISTICAL TABLES, PRINTS, ETC., DESCRIBING WOOL AND WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES AND OCCUPATIONS OF THE COMMERCE IN THEM AND TRADE OF HAIR, FUR, FEATHERS, ETC.

PORT COMMISSIONERS' REPORT FOR 1879-80.

RESOLUTION:

READ—

The Administration Report of the Port Commissioners of Calcutta for 1879-80.

The most important measure of the year in connection with the administration of the Port Trust was the passing of an Act, amending Act V. (B.O.) of 1870, to enable the Commissioners to consolidate the various loans made to them from time to time by Government, and to afford them facilities for contracting future loans in the open market. The present financial position of the Trust stands thus:—inclusive of the sum of ten lakhs of rupees for works previously carried out by Government, which was charged as a debt against the Trust when it was first constituted, the Commissioners have borrowed Rs. 60,25,100 from Government. The loans were all

advanced subject to interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and repayment by instalments in 30 years. The Commissioners have during the past ten years repaid Rs. 6,84,751, and the balance left for consolidation under the new Act was therefore Rs. 53,40,349. This amount is to be repaid in 30 years by half-yearly instalments of Rs. 1,63,067-5, inclusive of interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The Trust has, moreover, a permanent book-debt of Rs. 17,65,000, which is not repayable, but is charged with interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., amounting to Rs. 39,712-8 half-yearly. This represents the original value of the block made over to the Commissioners on the transfer of the Port to their charge. The actual value of the block on the 31st March last was Rs. 15,65,000, allowance being made for a total deduction of Rs. 2,87,608 for depreciation, and an addition of Rs. 87,608 for renewals. The Port has, however, acquired new block of the total value of Rs. 3,14,589, and the present value of its entire block is, therefore, Rs. 18,79,589. (The statement on page 72 of the report should have included the new moorings and heave-up boat, which are entered in the statement on the preceding page). Since the close of 1877-78 a Depreciation Reserve Fund of Rs. 2,00,000, accumulated from the unspent balances of the amounts annually set aside for renewal, has also been returned on account of the block. In addition to this Fund, the Commissioners have to their credit an investment of Rs. 3,50,000 to meet extraordinary and unforeseen expenditure, such as might be required on the occurrence of a cyclone. The total reserve secured by both funds is thus five and a half lakhs of Rupees.

2. Against the consolidated debt, and the permanent book-debt, amounting together to Rs. 71,95,349, the

Commissioners hold property of the total value of Rs. 1,21,10,811, estimated only according to the expenditure incurred on new works, on the purchase of a portion of the land occupied, and in the formation of the reserve funds; thus—

	Ra.
Expenditure on jetties and works for the accommodation of sea-going vessels ...	46,84,503
Expenditure on wharves, jetties, and landing stages for the accommodation of boat traffic, and tramways to connect railway with wharves and jetties ...	48,78,887
Expenditure on buoys, moorings, anchor-vessels, and boats, &c. ...	18,79,588
Investment for Jetty Reserve Fund ...	69,243
Ditto for Port ditto ...	3,64,250
Ditto for Depreciation Reserve Fund ...	1,99,995
Ditto for Insurance ditto ...	34,345
Total ...	1,21,10,811

The following table shows how the foregoing expenditure was met:—

	Ra.
By loans repayable (from Government) ...	58,92,973
By book-debt loan ...	17,65,000
Contribution from Government towards purchase of land ...	74,584
From sale of surplus lands ...	4,08,872
From current revenue since 1870 ...	39,56,382
Total ...	1,21,10,811

3. The new Act, besides enabling the Commissioners to consolidate their outstanding loans, provides for the half-yearly payment of interest on the book-debt of Rs. 17,65,000, and regulates the manner and terms on which

new loans may be contracted, and the interest or the value of the loans may be recovered on default. Such loans require the sanction of the local Government, and must be contracted in India and in the Indian currency, unless the Lieutenant-Governor, with the approval of the Government of India, direct otherwise; and the Commissioners are bound to provide a sinking fund by half-yearly instalments, in the case of each loan, to liquidate the loan within 30 years. The loans may be raised on the security of the whole or of a portion of the property of the Commissioners, or of their receipts from tolls, duties, &c., and Government retains no preferential claims as heretofore on their property. The Port Reserve investments of five and a half lakhs of rupees and the sinking fund for the liquidation of each loan are, however, specially exempted from liability on account of the repayment of loans. For the recovery of the interest or principal of a loan, the property or the sources of income on the security of which the loan was made may be attached by Government, and the proceeds appropriated to discharge the liabilities.

4. The Trust is in a satisfactory financial condition, and it may be hoped that the ample security afforded by their property and income, and provided for by the recent law, will place the Commissioners in a position of credit as borrowers in the open market. The provision of the law requiring that the previous sanction of Government shall be obtained to every loan is a safeguard against undue borrowing, but the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that, in this respect, the Government will very rarely, if ever, find itself called upon to overrule the proposals of the Commissioners.

5. The total income of the Commissioners during the past year was Rs. 18,64,293 as compared with Rs. 18,57,090 in 1878-79. The year having opened with a revenue cash balance of Rs. 3,73,041, the full amount available for expenditure from revenue was Rs. 22,37,334. The ordinary revenue expenditure, including the half-yearly payment on account of debt, was Rs. 13,67,948, Rs. 5,85,612 were appropriated for new works and improvements, Rs. 32,634 were held on suspense account, and Rs. 2,57,140 remained as a cash balance at the end of the year.

6. The steady progress in the construction of new works and improvements, which has marked the administration of the Commissioners from year to year, has been fully maintained during 1879-80. Much, nevertheless, remains to be done to complete the arrangements required for the accommodation of the large and growing traffic of the Port, and a heavy annual outlay will be indispensable for many years to come. Of the total expenditure of the past year on new works, amounting to Rs. 7,90,925, Rs. 4,13,390 were spent in improving the accommodation for sea-going vessels at the jetties, Rs. 1,63,885 in improving the accommodation for boat-traffic, Rs. 64,610 on the tramway, and Rs. 1,48,840 on works of general improvement. A new jetty and two cargo-sheds were completed, and six new cranes set up for sea-going vessels. The Port now possesses three jetties at which cargo can be delivered direct from the vessels to the sheds without the use of trolleys. For the benefit of the boat-traffic the retaining wall and ghats from Ahercetolal to Bagh-bazar have been completed, eleven new toll-houses erected, and five additional landing-stages provided. The tramway line was doubled in two places, and twenty new

waggons were procured to meet the increase in the local traffic. Two new warehouses, for the storage of country produce, were completed on the Strand Bank lands, a heave-up boat was added to the block of the Port, and a new line of moorings was laid between Chandpal Ghât and Fort Point.

7. The jetties yielded a gross income of Rs. 6,69,654, against Rs. 6,74,923 in 1878-79; the expenditure was Rs. 4,67,577, and the net income Rs. 2,02,077. It is satisfactory to learn that the Commissioners' anticipation that the reduction in the landing charges, which came into operation on the 1st August 1878, would result in a large decrease of the jetty receipts has not been fulfilled. There was actually an increase of Rs. 8,099 in the income from these charges, owing to an increase in the quantity of goods landed. On the other hand, notwithstanding the larger quantity of goods landed, wharf rents and removal charges fell off by Rs. 17,539, consignees having been more prompt in removing their goods. The largest increase in landing charges was derived from piece-goods, on which Rs. 12,917 were realized in excess of the receipts of the previous year. Of the charges on exports, amounting to Rs. 55,745, three-fifths were paid on hides and tea. These articles are more conveniently shipped at the jetties than by boats, and the shipments at the jetties are increasing. The jetty expenditure exceeded that of the previous year by Rs. 14,239, owing to an increase in the charge for interest and necessary strengthening of the working establishments. The jetties were used by 192 vessels against 184 in 1878-79, with an increase of 20,000 tons; but they were nevertheless occupied 50 days less than in 1875-79. It is not likely

therefore, that the Commissioners will experience any great difficulty in making convenient arrangements for accommodating the steamers trading with China and the Straits. The Lieutenant-Governor considers that the measures which have been taken to obviate the grounds of complaint urged by the Agents of these vessels are judicious and sufficient. The floating 30-ton crane is not realizing the expectations which the Commissioners entertained in regard to it as an investment. Its earnings amounted to Rs. 15,136 against an expenditure of Rs. 13,642, leaving a profit of only Rs. 1,494 on the original outlay of Rs. 1,47,217.

8. The receipts from the Inland Vessels' Wharves, including the Tramway, were Rs. 4,80,923 against Rs. 4,59,862 in the previous year, and the expenditure was Rs. 3,21,633 against Rs. 2,65,137, leaving a net income of Rs. 1,59,388 as compared with Rs. 1,94,725 in 1878-79. Exclusive of the tramway, however, the receipts fell off by Rs. 33,363. Of this sum, Rs. 27,456 is accounted for by a decrease in the tolls realized on grain and seeds. The Commissioners explain that a large portion of the grain and seed traffic which formerly came by boats is now carried by the East Indian Railway, and that up-country merchants having taken to the practice of sending down their grain and seed in bags ready for shipment, instead of transmitting them in bulk to be prepared for shipment in Calcutta, the consignments are conveyed direct to the ships from the Railway premises, and do not pass over the port wharves. The competition between the railway and the boats is doubtless causing a considerable reduction of the income of the Commissioners from their wharves, and its effects on their receipts are likely

to become more conspicuous, as the native traders learn more and more to appreciate the advantages offered by the railway, but in the general interests of trade this result cannot be contemplated with regret. The large increase in the expenditure of the past year on account of the wharves is due chiefly to the transfer to this head of a charge for interest hitherto shown in the accounts of the Strand Bank lands, and to the cost of repairing two slips in the river bank, which occurred towards the end of the rains.

9. The tramway is assuming a very prominent place among the works constructed by the Commissioners. It proceeds along the river bank and joins the Eastern Bengal Railway on the northern side of the Chipore Canal, and has both a local traffic and a through traffic from the wharves and jetties to the railway. During the year its gross receipts amounted to Rs. 1,34,901, and the working expenses to Rs. 74,019, leaving a balance of Rs. 60,882 available for the payment of charges on account of interest and sinking fund, and for the cost of additional works. The returns of traffic show a large increase over the results of the two previous years. The Eastern Bengal Railway Company have, after a year's trial, withdrawn from the agreement under which they undertook the superintendence of the line, and this has reverted to the Commissioners. The projects lately submitted by the Commissioners for the construction of additional sidings and for other works of extension and improvement have received the sanction of Government. They appear to have been adopted by the Commissioners after very careful consideration and consultation with merchants interested in the tramway.

10. The accounts of the Strand Bank lands show an increase of nearly Rs. 10,000 derived from the rents of the warehouses and godowns. The total income amounted to Rs. 1,52,415 against Rs. 1,43,021 in 1878-79. The expenditure was Rs. 83,009 against Rs. 91,731. There was a large reduction under the head of interest caused by the transfer mentioned above.

11. In the Port Proper, or Harbour Master's Department, the receipts amounted to Rs. 5,61,299, and the expenditure to Rs. 3,92,352, as compared with Rs. 5,80,184, and Rs. 3,98,106 respectively in the previous year. The net revenue was thus Rs. 1,68,947 against Rs. 1,82,078 in 1878-79. The receipts from mooring hire were enhanced by a payment of Rs. 36,000 on account of Government vessels, which was due for the previous year. The fees from cargo and passenger-boats also yielded a much larger amount than was expected. During the year 4,982 cargo-boats and 399 passenger-boats were surveyed by the Commissioners' Surveyor, and 1,565 passenger-boats, surveyed before the transfer of the control of these boats from the Commissioner of Police to the Port Commissioners, were also plying in the port. Altogether 5,281 boats and 5,085 manjhees were licensed and registered by the Commissioners. The receipts amounted to Rs. 47,772. This income was, however, in excess of what the Commissioners required, and the Lieutenant-Governor willingly sanctioned the reduction of the rates proposed by them after the close of the year, in the interests of the boat-owners and manjhees.

12. The total number of vessels which entered the port during the year was 896, of which 442 were steamers, and 454 sailing vessels. There was a decrease of 71 vessels

as compared with the previous year, but the falling off in tonnage was comparatively small, the average size of the vessels having again increased. The total gross tonnage was 14,15,979 tons against 14,30,789 in 1878-79. The steamers which came through the Suez Canal were 136 in number, and their average tonnage reached the high figure of 2,658 tons. The decrease in shipping necessarily caused a reduction in the number of operations carried out by the Harbour Master's Department during the year; but the Lieutenant-Governor notices with satisfaction that the percentage of accidents also showed reduction. He has already had occasion to comment favourably on the improvement which has also taken place in recent years in the management of vessels by pilots in the port approaches.

13. The services of the floating fire-engine were called into requisition in several serious cases last year. The most important of these was the explosion at Garden Reach on board the boats laden with kerosine-oil discharged from the ship *Chalmers*, the consequences of which might have been of the gravest character had not the tide and wind prevented the burning sheet of oil, extending some 400 feet across the stream, from drifting up into the harbour among the shipping. The whole question of the importation, transport, and storage of inflammable oils was fully enquired into and reported on by the Committee appointed in consequence of this accident, and the matter was submitted to the Government of India. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that a Bill is now before the Supreme Council to regulate the traffic in these oils. The Commissioners refer in paragraph 70 of the Report to the proposal which they

lately submitted to Government for an increase in the fees charged for the storage of gunpowder in the Moyapore Magazine. The orders of Government have lately been communicated to them. The Lieutenant-Governor has sanctioned the revised charges for the delivery order and the godown rent, but there appeared to him to be no sufficient grounds for sanctioning the fee of Rs. 5 which the Commissioners proposed to levy from each vessel entering the port.

14. The anchors recovered during the year were 17 in number, and the chains measured 454 fathoms. With the addition of the stock on hand, there were 42 anchors and 926 fathoms of chain for disposal. The total disposed of, by delivery to the owners or by sale, was 36 anchors and 822 fathoms of chain. The sum realized by sale amounted to Rs. 3,966. The Harbour Master's report shows that the moorings were properly attended to during the year, and that their condition is satisfactory. The dredging operations of the year do not contrast favourably with those of the previous year. The number of cubic feet dredged was larger, but the amount earned fell off, causing an increase in the net cost of dredging and in the rate per 1,000 cubic feet. This is accounted for, as the report explains, by the loss of one of the hopper barges, which collided with a buoy and sank. All the efforts made to raise the barge proved unavailing, and she has entirely disappeared beneath the sand. A new barge must be procured to prevent the entire stoppage of dredging operations in case the remaining barge is disabled or lost.

15. Opportunity was taken of the passing of the new Act to amend the provisions of Act V, 1870, in regard to the making of bye-laws for the purposes of the Trust, so as

to remove any doubt of the power of the Commissioners to enforce the observance of the bye-laws by the public. Their powers in connection with the working of their tramway were also enlarged.

16. The Government agreed during the year to transfer to the Commissioners the Armeian Ghât site and buildings at a valuation of Rs. 4,05,716. This amount will have to be raised by a loan under the provisions of the new Act. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the negotiations between the Commissioners and the Municipality for the removal of the unsightly structure which serves as the pumping-station of the Corporation at Chandpal Ghât will be brought to a satisfactory termination before long. The matter has been pending for two years.

17. The Bill to provide for the detention of unseaworthy ships, and to introduce various amendments in the Indian Merchant Shipping Law, which was alluded to in paragraph 22 of the Resolution on the last report of the Commissioners, became law on the 11th March of the current year. It authorizes the local Government to make over to the Port Commissioners the working of the provisions relating to unseaworthy and unsafe ships. The report which the Commissioners have submitted on this and other matters in the Act, which were referred to them for opinion, is under consideration, and orders will be issued as soon as practicable.

18. The question of bringing the Port Officer's Department under the control of the Commissioners, and thus extending their jurisdiction to the approaches of the port, has at length reached its final stage. It was investigated and reported on by a Special Committee during the year,

and the views of the Lieutenant-Governor on the subject will be shortly submitted to the Government of India.

19. In conclusion, the Lieutenant-Governor desires to acknowledge the ability and interest which the Commissioners have manifested in the administration of the affairs of the Trust during the year. They have in their Vice-Chairman, Mr. Duff Bruce, an executive officer whose services to the Port are of the greatest value.

PORT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 1879-80.

RESOLUTION:

READ—

The Annual Report of the Port Officer for 1879-80. **LIEUTENANT STIFFE** was appointed Port Officer in the course of the year, and assumed charge of his duties from Lieutenant Warden on the 5th August last. Lieutenant Warden remains attached to the department for the present as an Assistant Port Officer.

2. The Pilot Service consisted at the end of the year of 67 pilots and 22 leadsmen, or a total of '89 officers. The number of pilots is below the sanctioned strength of the service (70 pilots and 20 leadsmen), but it is at present quite sufficient for the work of the port. The casualties of the past year were one death and one dismissal among the pilots. Four licensed leadsmen qualified for pilots, and were admitted to the mate's grade; and eleven leadsmen apprentices appointed since 1877 passed their first examination as second mates, of whom six have been posted to pilot brigs as second officers, while five continue to run as leadsmen, pending the occurrence of vacancies on pilot vessels. The result of this

examination was creditable to the leadsmen apprentices. The Port Officer speaks very favourably of the efficiency of the Pilot Service as a whole, and in this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor fully concurs. Some important changes affecting the distribution of work among the members of the service were carried out during the year. These changes were advocated by the majority of the pilots themselves, and experience has so far shown that they have been attended with good results. Applications for pilots were restricted to the pilot who turns the vessel up, and, failing him, to the pilot of the turn; it was ruled that special pilots should be allowed only to lines of mail steamers; that no pilot below the grade of senior master should run as a special pilot, save on vessels of his own grade and tonnage, and that the sanction of Government must be obtained in every case to the employment of a special pilot; and the allotment of tonnage among the different grades was revised. The following scale of tonnage was fixed as compared with the scale previously in force:—

Tonnage Scale.		Former Scale.	
	Tonnage		Tonnage
Male Pilots up to	500	Male Pilots up to	800
Junior Masters	801—1,300	Junior Masters	801—1,175
Senior Masters	801—1,650	Senior Masters	801—1,500
French Pilots	over 1,650	French Pilots	over 1,300

The new scale has been introduced tentatively. Monthly statements showing the effect of the change are being submitted by the Port Officer, and the whole subject will be reconsidered after a sufficient period has elapsed.

3. The following statement gives particulars of the shipping of the port during the past ten years:—

Comparative statement showing the number of arrivals and departures of vessels, their tonnage, and the

number of sailing vessels that took steam during the last ten years from 1870-71 to 1879-80.

Year.	Number of arrivals.	Tonnage.	Number of departures.	Tonnage.	Number of arrivals and departures.	Average tonnage.	Total tonnage.	Number of vessels that took steam.	Number of vessels that took steam and upwards.	Number of vessels that took steam and upwards.	Number of vessels that took steam and upwards.
1870-71	531	205,153	518	189,651	1,049	1,654	1,948,621	538	472	1,010	1,113
1871-72	599	217,541	580	189,512	1,179	1,759	2,214,114	510	615	1,125	1,193
1872-73	616	219,618	594	187,661	1,210	1,750	2,214,114	510	615	1,125	1,193
1873-74	591	229,649	546	188,899	1,137	1,737	2,214,114	510	615	1,125	1,193
1874-75	527	210,664	511	181,972	1,038	1,539	1,948,621	502	502	999	999
1875-76	514	211,501	500	186,181	1,014	1,514	1,948,621	498	497	995	995
1876-77	1,161	1,696,781	1,121	1,488,181	2,282	3,183	3,183,181	999	997	1,996	1,996
1877-78	1,175	1,696,781	1,121	1,488,181	2,296	3,183	3,183,181	999	997	1,996	1,996
1878-79	1,175	1,696,781	1,121	1,488,181	2,296	3,183	3,183,181	999	997	1,996	1,996
1879-80	1,175	1,696,781	1,121	1,488,181	2,296	3,183	3,183,181	999	997	1,996	1,996

If the two years 1876-77 and 1877-78, during which there was an abnormal increase of shipping on account of the large exports of grain to the famine-stricken districts of Southern India, be left out of consideration, it will be observed from this statement that the number of arrivals and departures in the past year was the lowest of any year since 1869-70, while the aggregate tonnage was the highest, save that for the year 1878-79; and that the average tonnage of vessels visiting the port has been steadily increasing since 1869-70, reaching its maximum (1,584 tons) in the past year. The number of arrivals in the past year was 896, and of departures 895, or a total of 1,791. Of the former, 442 were steamers and 454 sailing vessels; and of the departures, 434 were steamers and 441 sailing vessels. These figures do not include steamers plying to Chandbally, of which there were 111 arrivals and 112 departures, and native craft. Of the steamers that visited the port 133, and of the sailing vessels 163, drew 21 feet and upwards. The branch

pilots piloted on an average 428 vessels each a month, the masters 277, and the mates 236 vessels.

4. There were 34 groundings of vessels; 31 of which were attended with no damage, and ten collisions, all of a trifling character. The percentage of accidents on the shipping was 2.45. The only total loss which occurred within the limits of the port was that of the inland steamer *Chunar*, which struck the bank and foundered in Diamond Harbour Reach in May 1879. The vessel was not, however, in charge of a pilot, and the port authorities were in no way responsible for the casualty. A statement appended to the report shows that there has been an immense improvement in the matter of accidents in the port approaches in recent years; notwithstanding the increase in the average size of the vessels visiting the port. Lieutenant Stiffe rightly remarks that this speaks well for the efficiency of the pilots, the accuracy of the surveys, and the management of the port. The Marine Court for the trial of pilots enquired into three cases during the year. Two cases resulted in acquittals, and one in the dismissal of the pilot, who was convicted of repeated disobedience of orders. There were also three departmental enquiries. In one case the pilot was acquitted of blame, in another he was reduced to half earnings for three months, and in the third he was cautioned. Although no serious casualty, save that of the *Chunar*, occurred within the limits of the port, the year was marked by three lamentable disasters close to the port. The first of these was the collision which took place between the ship *Brenhilda* and the British India Steam Navigation Company's steamer *Aw* on the night of the 31st May 1879, about 70 miles from the Sandheads, resulting

in the foundering of the *Aw*, with the loss of 70 lives. The Court of Enquiry held that the *Brenhilda* was in fault, but refrained from instituting proceedings against the Captain for the suspension of his certificate. The matter was brought by Government before the High Court in its Admiralty Jurisdiction, on charges framed against the Second Officer of the *Aw*, who was the officer of the watch on that vessel, and the Captain of the *Brenhilda*. The former was acquitted, but the certificate of the Captain of the *Brenhilda* was suspended for three months. The decision was confirmed by this Government. The next occurrence was the stranding and subsequent loss of the ship *Lady Belhaven* on the Argo Flat, at the mouth of the Haringhata river in the Sunderbuns, on the 3rd July 1879. The crew succeeded in reaching the Hooghly in their boats and were rescued. The Captain was proved to have shown carelessness and incompetence in navigating his vessel, and his certificate was suspended for twelve months. The third casualty was the total loss of the ship *Philosopher*, with twelve lives and the entire cargo, on the 26th September 1879, at the mouth of the Dary river on the coast of Orissa. The Court of Enquiry were of opinion that the wreck was due to an unusually strong current running towards the Orissa coast, of the full effects of which the Captain was not in a position to judge. He was accordingly acquitted of blame.

5. The report gives, as usual, a detailed account of the condition of the channels leading to the port and of the work of the River Survey Department during the year. It appears that the James and Mary Bar was impassable for 37 days to vessels drawing 24 feet, for 19 days to

vessels drawing 23 feet, for 12 days to vessels drawing 22 feet, for 6 days to vessels drawing 21 feet, and for one day to vessels drawing 20 feet. The Bellary Bar was also impassable for 43 days to vessels drawing 24 feet, for 14 days to vessels drawing 23 feet, and for 5 days to vessels drawing 22 feet. These periods were confined to the neap tides. Three self-registering tidal-gauges have been sanctioned for the Hooghly, to be maintained under the direction of the Tidal Department of the Survey of India. The observations will doubtless prove of much advantage in connection with the navigation of the river.

6. The Indian Government steamer *Undaunted*, whose services are lent to this Government as required, performed twenty-one trips to the Sandheads, Mutlah, and False Point during the year. On two occasions she proceeded to the wrecks of the *Lady Behaven* and the *Philosopher* to render assistance. The state of the pilot-brigs, light-ships, and other vessels belonging to the local Government calls for no remark. The anchor-vessel *Vulcan* was condemned during the year, and another vessel to replace her is under construction in the Government Dockyard. The proposal to use the hull of the *Vulcan* as a floating coal bulk for the river survey vessels at Diamond Harbour, to which the Port Officer alludes in his report, has been abandoned, and the hull should now be sold. There being no vessel available for the work, no anchors or cables were recovered during the year. The stock of articles previously recovered was, however, sold. The amount realized was Rs. 7,788, while the expenditure for the year was only Rs. 1,692.

7. The usual inspection of the refuge-houses on the sea-face of the Sunderbans was carried out, and the stocks

of provisions were replenished. The Port Officer also visited the Orissa ports and Chittagong. Orders were separately passed on the reports submitted by him.

8. The number of certificates granted to steam-vessels surveyed under Acts V. of 1863 and I. of 1868 was 143 against 152 in the previous year. In one case (the inland steamer *Beggal*), in which a certificate for three months only was granted, one of the boilers of the vessel burst shortly before the expiry of the certificate, causing the death of two men. In passing orders on the report of the Special Committee appointed to enquire into this explosion, the Lieutenant-Governor has laid down instructions which should greatly diminish the chance of such accidents in future. Fifty-one vessels were inspected under Act VIII. of 1876 (the Native Passenger Ships Act) during the year. Only two vessels were registered under the English Merchant Shipping Act, and none under Act X. of 1841. The examination for colonial certificates to masters, mates, and engineers resulted in the passing of 11 masters out of 12 candidates, of 2 first mates, 2 second mates, and 2 first-class engineers out of 3 candidates in each case, and of 3 second-class engineers out of 5 candidates. For local certificates, one master passed out of 3 candidates, 7 first mates out of 10 candidates, 12 second mates out of 14 candidates, 1 first-class engineer out of 3 candidates, 2 second-class engineers out of 4 candidates, and 18 engine-drivers out of 20 candidates. Examinations were also held for the first time for the grant of certificates to commanders of inland steamers, who are now bound to obtain such certificates under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1879.

9. The only other matters connected with the administration of the port and its approaches which call for notice are the following. Pilotage was made compulsory in the Hooghly for all vessels of a burthen exceeding 200 tons, under section 38 of Act XII. of 1875, from the 1st January 1880. Native vessels of less than 500 tons are, for the present, permitted to use native pilots licensed by the Port Officer, and the Chandbally steamers are not required to employ a pilot, provided their commanders hold licenses as steam-tug pilots. Government has under consideration the orders to be issued for carrying out the provisions of the new Indian Merchant Shipping Act VII. of 1880. The matter cannot be finally settled before the receipt of reports from officers to whom references have been made, and the framing of rules under certain sections by the Government of India. A new first-order dioptric light was set up during the year in the False Point Lighthouse. The light has been exhibited since the 1st February last.

10. The Committee appointed in March 1879 to enquire into marine expenditure under this Government, submitted their report during the past year. The recommendations of the report have been already considered and disposed of. The Lieutenant-Governor regrets that they were not of such a nature as to enable Government to effect at once any material reduction of expenditure.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

The balance at credit of the Chamber on the 31st October 1880 amounted to Rs. 3,548-3-2,

exclusive of Rs. 15,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

WALTER E. CRUM,
President.

APPENDIX.

*Statement of the Funds of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce,
from 1st May to 31st October 1880.*

[illegible]

31st October 1850.

E. E.
H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

Secretary.

ii

TONNAGE SCHEDULE for the Port of Calcutta, adopted at a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on the 12th February, 1872, with effect from 1st September 1872, except as regards the measurement of Cotton, Hemp, Jute Jute Cuttings, Rice, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, which, under the Chamber's Resolution of 14th June 1872, had effect from 1st July 1872.

ARTICLES.		Cwt. per Tonn.	Shells per Ton.
Alum, in bags and boxes	...	26	.....
Alum, in ditto	...	26	.....
Amisred, in bags	...	8	.....
Arrowroot, in cases	...	.....	50
Asafetida, in bags and cases	...	20	.....
Asafetida, in bags and boxes	...	20	.....
Apparel, in boxes	...	.....	50
Bark, in bags	...	8	.....
Bees' Wax	...	20 gross	.....
Barilla	...	20	.....
Buckwheat	...	20	.....
Borax	...	20	.....
Borax	...	20	.....
Bone	...	14	.....
Brimstone	...	20	.....
Buttira	...	.....	at per cent.
Cinnamon, in bags	...	16	.....
Cinnamon, in boxes	...	30	.....
Candianum, in refines	...	8	.....
Cassia, in boxes	...	50	.....
Cassia, in bags	...	12	.....
Castor Seed	...	16	.....
Chaffin, (dry) in bags	...	8	.....
China Root, in bags	...	11	.....
China Root, in boxes	...	8	.....
Chrysomel	...	50	.....
Charrah	...	14	.....
Charrah	...	50	.....
Cleves, in bags	...	8	.....
Cleves, in boxes	...	20	.....
Coral	...	20	.....
Cornichal	...	50	.....
Coffee, in bags	...	16	.....
Coffee, in 25 casks	...	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Coral, rough	20	.....
Coin, loose and unsorted	12	.....
Copra, or Coconut Kernel	14	.....
Coriander Seed	12	.....
Cotton	.....	60
Cowries	20	.....
Commim Seed	8	.....
" Black	8	.....
Cutch, in bags	18	.....
Dates, wet	20	.....
" dry	16	.....
Elephant's Teeth in bulk	20	.....
Furniture	20	.....
Gastic and Onions	12	.....
Ginger	16	.....
Gram	20	.....
Gums, in cases	.....	50
Gunny Bags and Gunny Cloth	.....	50
Gumrah	.....	50
Hemp	.....	50
Hides, Buffalo, or Cow, cured	14	.....
Horns, Horn Shavings and Tips	20	.....
Horse, Cow, Buffalo, or Deer	20	.....
India Rubber, in bags	16	.....
Indigo " cases	.....	50
Iron	.....	50
Jute	20	.....
Jute Cuttings	.....	50
Lac Dye	.....	50
Lard	.....	50
Lined	20 gross	.....
Mace	20	.....
Machinery	20	.....
Metals	20	.....
Mathic Seed	18	.....
Mincolums	.....	16
Mosses	.....	.....
Mother o' Pearl, in bags	20	2 bunches or 4 hids.
Manjet " chests	20	.....
Mustard or Rape Seed	30	.....
Nigs Seed	30	.....
Nutmegs, in cases or casks	20	.....
	.....	50

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Nux Vomica	16	.....
Oats	16	.....
Oil, in cases	.....	50
" casks	.....	4 hids.
Opium	.....	per chest
Paddy	16	.....
Palminine, in bags	16	.....
Pean	20	.....
Pepper, long	12	.....
" Black	14	.....
Planks and Deals	.....	10
Poppy Seed	20	.....
Pulchuck	10	.....
Rags	.....	50
Raw Silk, in bales	10	.....
Rattans for damage	20	.....
Red Wood, ditto	20	.....
Rhea	.....	50
Rice	20	.....
Rope, in coils	.....	50
" Lines and Twines in bundles	16	.....
Rum, in casks	.....	2 bunches or 4 hids.
Safflower	.....	50
Sago, in cases	.....	50
Salsomantic, in bags	20	.....
" boxes	.....	20 gross
Saltpetre	20	.....
Salt	20	.....
Sapan Wood for dyeing	20	.....
Sealing Wax, in cases	.....	50
Seed-lac, in cases	.....	50
" bags	16	.....
Senna	.....	50
Shell, rough, in bags	20	.....
Shell-lac, in cases	.....	50
" bags	16	.....
Silk Chussum	.....	50
Waste	.....	50
Silk Piece-Goods	.....	50
Skims	14	.....
Soap, country, in cases	.....	50
" bags	15	.....
" bar	20	.....
Stick Lac, in cases	.....	50
" bags	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ten Nett	Cubic feet per Ton.
Sugar	20	.....
Tallow, in cases or casks	20	.....
Talc	20	.....
Tamarinds, in cases or casks	20	.....
Tapioca	20	.....
Tea	50	.....
Teel Seed	60	.....
Timber, round	20	.....
" squared	40	.....
Timber	30	.....
Tobacco, in bales	20	.....
Tortoise Shells, in chests	16	.....
Turneric	16	.....
Wheat	20	.....
Wool	20	.....

1. Goods in Casks or Cases to be calculated gross weight when paying freight by weight; and where freight is made payable on measurement, the measurement be taken on the Custom House wharf, or other shipping wharf within a radius of 5 miles from the Custom House, except in the case of Cotton, the measurement of which shall be taken at the Screw-house.

2. Measurements to be taken at largest part of the bale,—inside the lashing on one side, and outside on the other.

3. Jute, Jute-cuttings, Hemp, Cotton, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, are scored in bales varying from 300 to 400 lbs.

4. The term "dead weight" shall be understood to mean the following articles:—Sugar, Saltpetre, Rice, Wheat, Gram, Diol, Peas, Linseed, Rapeseed and all Metals.

H. W. L. WOOD,
Secretary.

SCHEDULE OF COMMISSION CHARGES

Revised and adopted by a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on the 12th June 1861,—with effect from 1st January 1862.

- On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion; Gold Dust, or Coin ... 1 per cent.
- On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo, Raw Silks, Salt Pices-Goods, Opium, Pearls, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ... 2½ "
- On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by the Agent ... 5 "
- On the sale or purchase of all other goods—the commission in all cases to be charged upon the gross amount of sales, and in regard to purchases upon both cost and charges ... 5 "
- On returns for Consignments if made in produce ... 2½ "
- On returns of Consignments if in Bills; Bullion, or Treasure ... 1 "
- On accepting Bills against Consignments ... 1 "
- On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses, Lands, and all property of a like description ... 2½ "
- On goods and treasure consigned, and all other property of any description referred to Agency for sale; whether advanced upon or otherwise, which shall afterwards be withdrawn; and on goods consigned for conditional delivery to others and so delivered, on invoice amount at 2s. per rupee half com.
- On making advances or procuring loans of money for commercial purposes, when the aggregate commission does not exceed 5 per cent. ... 2½ per cent.
- On ordering, or receiving and delivering goods, or superintending the fulfilment of contracts, or on the shipment of goods, where no other commission is derived ... 2½ "

12. On guaranteeing Bills, Bonds, or other engagements, and on becoming security for administration of Estates, or to Government for the disbursement of public money ... 2½ per cent.
13. On *del credere*, or guaranteeing the due realization of sales ... 2½ "
14. On the management of Estates for Executors or Administrators ... 2½ "
15. On chartering ships or engaging tonnage for constituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading ... 2½ "
16. On advertising as the Agents for Owners or Commanders of ships for Cabin passengers, on the amount of passage money, whether the same shall pass through the Agent's hands or not ... 2½ "
17. On procuring freight for a ship by a shipping order or charter, or on procuring employment for a ship on monthly hire, or acting as Agents for owners, Captain, or charterers of a vessel, upon the gross amount of freight, brokerage inclusive ... 5 "
18. On engaging Asiatic Emigrants for a ship to the Mauritius, the West Indies, or elsewhere, upon the gross amount of earnings ... 5 "
19. On engaging troops for a ship to Great Britain or elsewhere, on the gross amount of passage money for rank and file ... 2½ "
20. On realising inward freight, inward troops, Emigrant, or Cabin passage money ... 2½ "
21. On landing and re-shipping goods from any vessel in distress, or on landing and selling by auction damaged goods from any such vessel, and acting as Agent for the Master on behalf of all concerned, on the declared value of all such goods as may be re-shipped, and on the net proceeds of all such goods as may be publicly sold ... 5 "
- If Opium, Indigo, Raw Silk, or Silk Piece-Goods ... 2½ "
- If Treasure, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ... 1 "

22. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or property ... 2½ per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of premium ... 2½ "
24. On drawing, purchasing, selling, or negotiating Bills of Exchange ... 1 "
25. On debts or other claims when a process at law or arbitration is incurred in claiming them ... 2½ "
- Or if recovered by such means ... 5 "
26. On Bills of Exchange returned dishonoured ... 1 "
27. On collecting House Rent ... 2½ "
28. On ship's Disbursements ... 2½ "
29. On realising Bottomry Bonds, or negotiating any loan on *respondentia* ... 2½ "
30. On granting Letters of Credit ... 1 "
31. On sale or purchase of Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, and on every exchange or transfer not by purchase from one class to another ... ½ "
32. On delivering up Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, on the market value. ½ "
33. On all amounts debited and credited within the year (less the balance brought forward) upon which no commission amounting to 5 per cent. has been charged ... ½ "
- 427 Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

CONVERSION OF STERLING FREIGHT INTO INDIAN CURRENCY.

The following Resolutions were adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber, held on the 31st May 1876.

"1. That the Resolution adopted at a Special General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held on the 19th June 1861 is hereby superseded; that the conversion into Indian Currency of Sterling Freight payable in Calcutta on goods from Great Britain or any port or place where the freight is expressed in sterling money shall be made payable by an approved Bank Bill on demand, or at the rate for Bank Bills on London payable on demand, unless otherwise stipulated; that the rate ruling at the close of a mail shall be the rate applicable for such purpose during the week next ensuing; and that this Resolution shall have effect from the 1st January 1877."

2. That the words *current rate of Exchange* shall be held to mean the rate current for Bank Bills on London payable on demand, unless otherwise stipulated.

3. That the rate for Bank Bills on London payable on demand shall be taken for reducing sterling into Indian money in all cases of commission payable in Calcutta on effecting charters for, or at, the ports of Akyab, Bassein, Rangoon, and Moulemein, for rice or timber; as well as in all cases of difference of freight payable at the said ports on re-charter or relet of tonnage, unless otherwise stipulated.

Forms of Bill of Lading and Boat Note as adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce on the 17th January 1880.

Shipped

in good order and well conditioned,

by _____
in and upon the good Ship or Vessel called the _____
whereof is Master for this present Voyage _____
and now lying in the Port of Calcutta and bound for _____

being marked and numbered as in the margin, and to be delivered, in the like good order and well conditioned, at the aforesaid Port of _____

(The Act of God, the Queen's Enemies, fire, and all and every other dangers and accidents of the Seas, Rivers, and Navigation of whatever nature and kind soever excepted)

unto _____
or to _____ Assigns, Freight for the said Goods being payable as customary _____

with Average accustomed. **In Witness** whereof, the Master or Agents of the said Ship hath affirmed to _____ Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date, one of which being accomplished, the others to stand void.

Dated in CALCUTTA, this _____ day of _____ 18 _____
Weight and Contents unknown.

No. _____
T. _____ Calcutta, _____ 18____

To
THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE
Ship

SIR,

Please receive on board the undernoted Goods
from Messrs.

and grant a clean receipt for the same.

N. B.—This cargo is only shipped on the special understanding that the Chief Officer will sign for all counter or quality marks and numbers, and the Bales or Packages are not to be taken on board except on these terms, and also when a Sircar is in attendance to check the tally.

In case of any dispute, the Shippers request prompt information in writing from one of the Officers of the ship.

Marks and Numbers.	Number of packages.	Description of Goods.	

No. _____
Calcutta, _____ 18____

Received on board the ship.....
in good order and condition the undermen-
tioned Goods from Messrs.....

N. B.—The Chief Officer is requested not to take in any package unless he is prepared to sign for all the qualifying marks and numbers.

All packages in bad order must be returned.

Marks and Numbers.	Number of packages.	Description of goods.	

Arrived alongside.....

Discharged

Returned

Remarks _____

(Signature) _____

Chief Officer.

Ship

Moorings.....

MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Aikman, J., Esq., <i>Acting Agent, Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China.</i>	Kelly and Co.
Agriculture, A. and Co.	Ker, Duls and Co.
Ager and Co.	King, Hamilton and Co.
Anderson, Wright and Co.	Longman, T., Esq., <i>Manager, Delhi & London Bank, Limited.</i>
Aschbach, P. and Co.	Morris, E., Esq., <i>Agent, Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.</i>
Barlow and Co.	Mackenzie, J., and Co.
Berg, Daniel and Co.	Mackenzie, Mackenzie and Co.
Billingham, W. & D., Esq., <i>Manager, Agri Bank.</i>	Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.
Burs and Co.	Minwell and Co.
Barry and Co.	Macknight, Anderson and Co.
Palmer, Lawrie and Co.	McIntosh, A. R., and Co.
Cashier, Nephew and Co.	Moss, W., and Co.
Carrist and Co.	Oldmeyer and Hadenfeldt.
Cannell, J., Esq., <i>Manager, National Bank of India.</i>	Patt, T., Esq., <i>Manager, Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris.</i>
Crooke, Home and Co.	Petrocchino Brothers.
Cohn Brothers and Puchs.	Purvisken Law and Co.
Duncan Brothers and Co.	Prestage, F., Esq., <i>Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway Company.</i>
Dwarkanath Dutt and Co.	Piggott, Chapman and Co.
Duffie, J., Esq.	Railt Brothers.
Ede and Holman.	Reinhold and Co.
Emmance and Oestley.	Robert and Charriol.
Ewing and Co.	Renters and Co.
Elliot, John and Co.	Schroder, Smith and Co.
Ern, S. D. J., Esq.	Schoone, Kilburn and Co.
Finlay, Muir and Co.	Sassoon, David and Co.
Guthrie and Co.	Shaw, Finlayson and Co.
Graham and Co.	Steel, Octavius, and Co.
Grimley and Co.	Thomas, J., and Co.
Gulboy, Elias S., Esq.	Turner, Morrison and Co.
Harget, G., Esq., <i>Agent, Oriental Bank Corporation.</i>	Turner and Co.
Henderson, George and Co.	Tambon, Paul and Son.
Helgers, F. W. and Co.	Ullmann, Hesselman and Co.
Hellers, C. H., Esq., <i>Agent, Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London and China.</i>	Wilkes, H. P., Esq., <i>(Alfred.)</i>
Hoare, Nisbet and Co.	Williamson, Jager and Co.
Hubei and Co.	Wiseman, Mitchell, Reid and Co.
Jedre, Skinner and Co.	Yule, Andrew and Co.
Kittencill, Bullen and Co.	

Honorary Member:

J. A. Crawford, Esq., C. S., late Collector of Customs.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

First That the Society shall be styled "THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE."

Second... That the object and duty of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce shall be to watch over and protect the general commercial interests of the Presidency of Bengal, and specially those of the port of Calcutta; to employ all means within its power for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good; and, with that view, to communicate with Government, public authorities, associations, and individuals; to receive references from, and to arbitrate between, parties willing to abide by the judgment and decision of the Chamber; and to form a code of practice to simplify and facilitate transaction of business.

Third... That merchants, bankers, ship-owners, and brokers shall alone be admissible as members of the Chamber.

Fourth... That candidates for admission as members of the Chamber shall be proposed and seconded by two members, and may

be elected by the Committee provisionally, such election being subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Fifth..... That the subscription of firms and banks shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of individual members 10 rupees per mensem, and of mofussil members 32 rupees per annum.

Sixth..... That any member of the Chamber whose subscription shall be three months in arrears shall cease to be a member, and his name shall be removed by the Committee from the list of members after one month's notice of such default.

Seventh... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of not less than five nor more than seven members, including the President and Vice-President, to be elected annually at a General Meeting of the Chamber in the month of May; the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, being ex-officio Chairman of the Committee, and in the absence of the President and Vice-President, the Committee to elect its own Chairman. Three to form a quorum.

Eighth... Annual elections of President, Vice-President, and members of the Com-

mittee shall be determined by a majority of votes of members, such votes being given in voting cards to be issued by the Secretary, numbered and bearing his signature; and no voting card shall be received for such purpose unless so authenticated. All vacancies created by the absence of the President, or Vice-President, from the Presidency for three months, or by departure for Europe, or by death, shall be forthwith filled up, and the election determined by votes to be taken as above and declared by the Committee. All vacancies created as above by the absence, departure, or death of any of the members of the Committee shall be forthwith filled up by selection by the Committee, subject to approval at first ordinary general meeting thereafter.

It is specially requested that before a member is returned to serve on the Committee, his nominator shall have ascertained his willingness to accept office in the event of his election by voting cards.

Ninth..... That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.

- Tenth.....* Two members of a firm or representatives of a bank shall not serve on the Committee at the same time.
- Eleventh.* That the Committee shall meet for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within the province of the Chamber at such times as may suit their convenience, and that the record of their proceedings be open to the inspection of members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient.
- Twelfth.* That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.
- Thirteenth.* That a half-yearly report of the proceedings of the Committee be prepared, printed, and circulated for information of members three days previous to the General Meeting at which such report and proceedings of the Committee shall be submitted for approval.
- Fourteenth.* That the Secretary shall be elected by the Committee; such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.
- Fifteenth.* That General Meetings of the Chamber shall be held at such times as the Com-

- mittee may consider convenient for the despatch of business.
- Sixteenth.* That any number of members present shall be held to constitute a General Meeting, called in conformity with the Rules of the Chamber for the despatch of ordinary business.
- Seventeenth.* That on the requisition of any five members of the Chamber, the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, or Chairman of Committee, shall call a Special General Meeting, to be held within 15 days subsequent to receipt of such requisition.
- Eighteenth.* That every subscribing firm or bank shall be entitled to one vote only, and that the Chairman of Committee and Chairman of General Meetings and Special General Meetings shall have a casting vote in cases of equality of votes.
- Nineteenth.* That parties holding powers of procreation shall, in the absence of their principals, be entitled to vote.
- Twentieth.* That voting by proxy shall be allowed; provided proxies are in favour of members of the Chamber.
- Twenty-first.* That the Chamber reserves to itself the right of expelling any of its members;

such expulsion to be decided by the votes of three-fourths of members present in person or by proxy at any Special General Meeting of the Chamber convened for the consideration of such expulsion.

Twenty-second. That strangers visiting the Presidency may be admitted by the Committee as honorary members for a period not exceeding two months.

Twenty-third. That no change in the rules and regulations of the Chamber shall be made, except by the votes of a majority of the members of the Chamber present in person or by proxy at a Special General Meeting to be held after previous notice of three months.

Calcutta :

Printed by Thos. S. Smith, City Press, 11, Beninck Street.

